MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

#273 Febuary 2006 $4

Fuses
Endstand
Out Cold
Pedestrians
BadEatingHabits
Western Addiction
Jesus Fucking Christ

plus scene reports, columns
news, reviews, and more

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TIM BROOKS

PINKEYE-How to Rob…-EP
FREEZE-Don't Forget Me Tommy-45
LYME REGIS-It Starts with the Band-EP
SOVIET VALVES-Sight That Harms-EP
BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-EP
THE FEELERS-Parts and Pieces-EP
CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE-EP
DEAD STOP-Live for Nothing-12"
PEDESTRIANS-LP / JOHN WOO-EP
SMALLTOWN/GIANT HAYSTACKS-live

MITCH CARDWELL

LYME REGIS-It Starts with the Band-EP
RAT TRAPS-Tennessee Rock 'n' Roll-EP
JEFFREY NOVAK ONE MAN BAND-LP
HAIRCUTS-45
THE FEELERS-Parts and Pieces-EP
FREEZE-Don't Forget Me Tommy-45
JACK & THE RIPPERS-I Think It's Over-LP
BLACK TIME-New Vague Themes-LP
THE RUBINOOS-Hurts Too Much-LP
SOVIET VALVES-Sight That Harms-EP

ROB COONS

FUCKED UP-Generation-12"
KRIEGSTANZ-Dig for Victory-EP
GAUZE-Fuckheads-LP
DEAD STOP-Live for Nothing-12"
JOHN WOO-Space Fight for an Anarchy-EP
V/A-Portland City Hard Punk-LP
V/A-Hardcore '83-LP
PEDESTRIANS-Future Shock-LP
DISCARGA/H ZERO-split EP
VITAMIN X-Rip It Out-EP

PAUL CURRAN

WALKING WRECK-Morphed Out-EP
MILHOUSE USA-LP
CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE-EP
DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS-LP
CODE OF HONOR-CD
I EXCUSE/TIM VERSION-split EP
PKDORES-EP / UNDER PRESSURE-CD
LYME REGIS-EP / VAGINA SORE JR.-EP
FRIDAY KNIGHT/PANTY SHANTY-split EP
SMALLTOWN-live

JONATHAN FLOYD

CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE-EP
DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS-LP
SOVIET VALVES-Sight That Harms-EP
PEDESTRIANS-Future Shock-LP
VAGINA SORE JR.-Strikes and Gutters-EP
I EXCUSE/TIM VERSION-split EP
DEAD STOP-Live for Nothing-12"
The Fest-day one
The Fest-day two
The Fest-day three

CHRIS HUBBARD

PEDESTRIANS-Future Shock-LP
RIPPERS-Raw Evil-EP
PINKEYE-How to Rob…-EP
DEAD STOP-Live for Nothing-12"
CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE-EP
YOUNG CANADIANS-No Escape-CD
LYME REGIS-It Starts with the Band-EP
V/A-Hardcore '83-LP
JACK & THE RIPPERS-I Think It's Over-LP
CODE OF HONOR-CD

KENNY KAOS

CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE-EP
THE HECKLERS-My Head-EP
HEARTBURNS/RONSKIBIITTI-split EP
CHILI COLD BLOOD-45
THE THINGS-Demon Stomp-EP
JOHN WOO-Space Fight for an Anarchy-EP
RADIATORS FROM SPACE-LP
THE FEELERS-Parts and Pieces-EP
HAIRCUTS-Haircuts Are No Fun-45
LYME REGIS-It Starts with the Band-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS-LP
BLACK TIME-New Vague Themes-LP
RAT TRAPS-Tennessee Rock 'n' Roll-EP
KUNG-FU ESCALATOR-Hate My Balls-10"
BLACK JOE LEWIS & COOL BREEZE-EP
SOVIET VALVES-Sight That Harms-EP
THE FEELERS -EP / PEDESTRIANS-LP
TIMES NEW VIKING-Busy Making Love & War-EP
MILHOUSE USE-LP / JACK SAINTS-live
All Kindsa Girls, New York Doll, All Dolled Up-film

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl or CD-only releases to the address on the previous page. See Demos section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

WILL KINSER

AFTER THE BOMBS-Terminal Filth...-EP
AGHAST-Desolate Legacy-EP
BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-EP
F.L.A.K.-Hitler Pope-EP / HELLSHOCK-EP
MILHOUSE USA-LP / GAUZE-LP
V/A-Portland City Hard Punk-LP
V/A-Hardcore '83-LP
FUCKED UP-Generation-12"
MAKILADORAS-In Eigen Hand-LP
BATTALION OF SAINTS-live

RAY LUJAN

REACTIONARY 3/TRUE NORTH-split LP
CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE-EP
LYME REGIS-EP / PEDESTRIANS-LP
SWEATSHOP BOYS-Is Your Mind Diseased?-CD
THE PRISONERS-Crash! Bam! Boom!-CD
MILLOY-More Than a Machine-CD
THE RUBINOOS-Hurts Too Much-LP
V/A-Nut Boppin, Whoppers!-CD
LATTERMAN-live / SMALLTOWN-live
PROPAGANDHI-live / BRIEFS-live

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

TIMES NEW VIKING-Busy Making Love & War-EP
PEDESTRIANS-LP / LYME REGIS-EP
SOVIET VALVES-Sight That Harms-EP
REACTIONARY 3/TRUE NORTH-split LP
FUCKED UP-Generation-12"
HOW WE LOST THE WAR-Jaywalker-EP
CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE-EP
KRIEGSTANZ-Dig for Victory-EP
SMALLTOWN-live
MODERN PROBLEMS-live

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

PEDESTRIANS-Future Shock-LP
BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-EP
SOVIET VALVES-Sight That Harms-EP
AGHAST-Desolate Legacy-EP
WALKING WRECK-Morphed Out-EP
UNDER PRESSURE-CD
V/A-Hardcore '83
V/A-Portland City Hard Punk-LP
DEAD STOP-Live for Nothing-12"
HAIRCUTS-Haircuts Are No Fun-45

DONNA POOLE

JOHN WOO-Space Fight for an Anarchy-EP
SOVIET VALVES-Sight That Harms-EP
LYME REGIS-It Starts with the Band-EP
MOD LASER/OHMYGODOHMYGOD – split EP
THE FEELERS-Parts and Pieces-EP
FRANK CASTLE GONNA BREAK YOUR NECK!-EP
MILHOUSE USA-LP / PEDESTRIANS-LP
DEAD STOP-Live for Nothing-12"
SMALLTOWN/GIANT HAYSTACKS-live
YOUNG OFFENDERS-live

BRUCE ROEHRS

KYRE & DUUNARIT-EP / GAUZE-LP
V/A-Gulf Coast Massacre-LP
V/A-Portland City Hard Punk-LP
HELLSHOCK-EP / DEAD STOP-12"
PKADORES-EP / DISCARGA/H ZERO-split EP
SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE-LP
VITAMIN X-Rip It Out-EP / F.L.A.K.-EP
BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-EP
V/A-"Hardcore '83" LP
YOUNG OFFENDERS-live

RYAN WELLS

RADIATORS FROM SPACE-LP
LYME REGIS-It Starts with the Band-EP
RAT TRAPS-Tennessee Rock 'n' Roll-EP
THE FEELERS-Parts and Pieces-EP
NECROPOLIS-Stalking Mark E Smith-EP
HAIRCUTS-45
KUNG-FU ESCALATOR-Hate My Balls-10"
TIMES NEW VIKING-Busy Making Love & War-EP
MODERNETTES-Get It Straight-CD
DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

The Match #103
Misled Youth #1
One Shoe in the Road-audio zine
Ox #62
One Way Ticket #4
Support
Poor and Forgotten #23
Hellfire for Fucker #3
Big Hands #1
Introvert #4

MRR SHITWORKERS

Anthony Alessandroni
Sam Alvarado
Aragorn!
Carl Auge
Peter Avery
Ariel Awesome
Michelle Barnhardt
Heather Blotto
Justin Briggs
Tim Brooks
Amy Browne
Dean Carrico
Ariel Celeste
Aaron Cometbus
Rob Coons
Craig Cox
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#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#170/July '97. Tedio Boys, Mine, The Four Cockroaches, Meanwhile, Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hood Rat, Bristle, The Slits. Scene reports: West Canada, France, Indonesia.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, "Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scene report

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech scene report, New Zealand scene report.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged/Criminal IQ/Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene Reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene Reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

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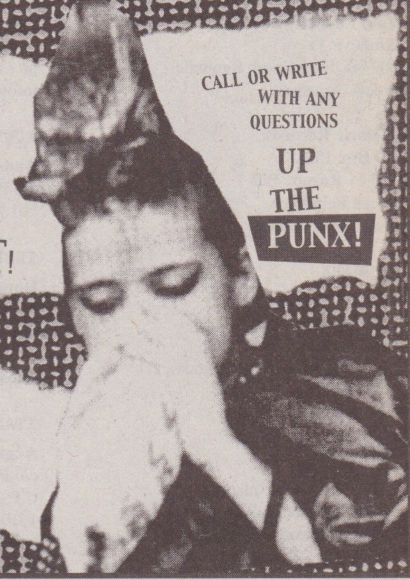

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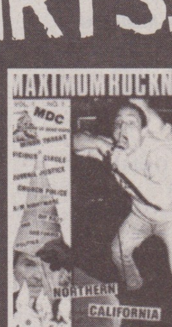

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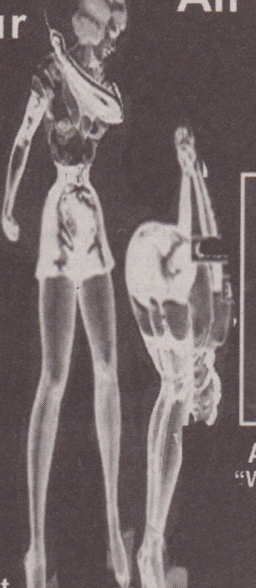

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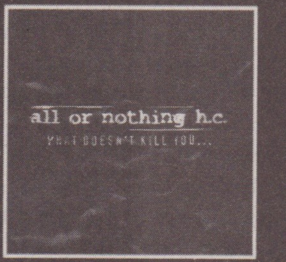
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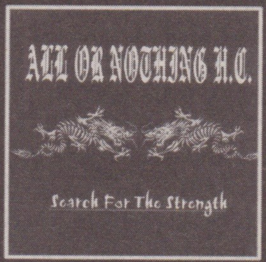
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LETTERS

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Hey MRR and readers—

Over the past few months a lot of punks, punk bands and punk zines have joined the Internet site known as myspace.com. I joined it myself for a while until I realized how lame it was. Now it seems that more than 50% of the DIY punk scene has a page on this corporate site, how lame is that? Do I really need to explain why it is so lame? Every corporate asshole and his mom is on this site. It is financed by some really shitty advertisements. The shittiest bands on earth have their page. It supports everything we're against. It *sucks*, plain and simple. It's like the whole DIY punk scene has turned into an Internet version of the Warped Tour all of a sudden. Seeing all my favorite bands go on this site I feel really bad for what the punk scene has become. What happened to saying, "fuck you" to corporations?

I don't blame anyone, this shit is addictive, and is a very good and quite genius marketing plan.

Now please read this. This is part of the "MySpace.com Terms of Use Agreement". You can see it on their site, even before being a member.

"Proprietary Rights in Content on MySpace.com. MySpace.com owns and retains all proprietary rights in the Website and the Service."

Do I need to write that bigger for you?? *"MYSPACE.COM OWNS AND RETAINS ALL PROPRIETARY RIGHTS IN THE WEBSITE AND THE SERVICE."*

If you still don't get it, it means that everything that is on the website legally belongs to MySpace, and by becoming a member, you're giving them the right to do whatever the fuck they want with your bands songs and pictures.

I don't know about you but for me it feels really shitty to know that some corporate website *owns* songs by some of my favorite DIY, so-called "political" punk bands.

Thanx for reading.

—Alex
Ratcharge fanzine
France

Dearest Punks of MRR—

Thanks so much for the kind review of the It Burns *Cut The Red Wire* 7"! There are maybe a handful of copies left, so if you want one, you'd better get it soon. Oh...wait...I guess during the graphic designing frenzy, and last minute half-assery that was putting together that 7", I forgot to put an address on it. Well, that's a good thing anyways because I, and Dry Rot Records, have moved. The new address is: 2407 N. Pierce / Milwaukee, WI / 53212. (We share the same corporate headquarters now as the wonderful Dingus Records!).

Anyways, we have a couple of new releases lined up. The long awaited (at least by the members of the band) Panic Disorder s/t 7" should be out shortly, and a Quest For Fire/The Kind of Jazz Music That Kills split record will be done soon as well. So drop a line, and keep in touch, just in case.

Thanks for wasting print space on me, yet again!

—Ray Suburbia
stayinchicago@hotmail.com

MRR—

I read the San Francisco/Bay Area scene report in your magazine a few issues back. I don't have much money but I would like to hear the bands that were written about. I am writing now to ask if anyone out there wants to do a tape trade or will make a mix for a few bucks. Please write to me and let me know, because I'd love to hear this stuff. The bands I'm interested in: Allergic To Bullshit, This Is My Fist, Full Moon Partisans, Stripmall Seizures, Li'l Runt, Minor Sextion, and the Icky Girlfriends.

Thanks,

—Ray SS
San Antonio,TX
jiveterkey@hotmail.com

Hey MRR—

2005 winds down and I find myself sending my first ever letter to the 'zine that helped form my life. I turn 30 in a couple of months and I remember thinking that "Punks Over 30" issue would never be relatable, so I figured I'd say I was wrong. I strayed away from punk music several times in the last fifteen to twenty years but I keep coming back. I just wanted to say thanks to this zine for introducing me to way more cool bands and zines and stuff than I ever had time to find. We also started our own DIY production company here in Bayard, New Mexico and are grateful that we have a place like *Maximumrocknroll* to send our zines and videos and stuff to review. We are looking for contact with all kinds of people, so please get in touch and tell us whatever you like and we would love people to send us stuff to review in our zine too so I've included that address as well. This is one of the corniest sounding letteres you would probably ever print but corn punk has been lacking since the demise of the Hickoids. Thanks!

—Robert Murillo
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Dear MRR,

I know I'm going to be labeled racist or something so I'm not using my real name or email but Mattilda's column in #271 really bugged me. He's dead on with the stuff he said about the hurricane "relief" but the comments about San Francisco's bus system really infuriated me. I've lived in San Francisco all my life and I've paid the bus fare all my life. Typically (but not always) the people who do not pay the fare are young men of color who know that the bus driver and passengers are too intimidated or indifferent to enforce the rules. You claim they're being unfairly targeted, but whenever I've seen a driver or passenger verbally threatened, blatant graffiti writing or someone playing their radio at full blast just to annoy everyone the perpetrator has been one of your "victims." People of all colors will verify my claim. It's a shame that so many of these young men live down to their reputations. And it's because of their actions and those of the other freeloaders that service suffers and poor people can no longer afford to ride the bus. Meanwhile the "facist" bus drivers you talk about have been attacked so many times they have to post signs reminding people it's a crime to do so. I have yet to see anyone enforce the "everybody must pay" rule but I'm glad they've started. I'm expecting you to tell me I'm towing the company line, that if everyone paid the fare the money would feed the rich and the bus service would not get better. You can't prove that until everyone starts paying. Until then I hope you have a comfortable pair of walking shoes.

—B. Ryder

Dear B. Ryder —

Okay, first things first: no bus riders should have to pay the fare. That's right — no one. Bus service subsidizes downtown megacorporations — a modest tax would easily pay for free service for everyone — that's right, everyone. Until such a basic reform occurs, there is every reason to avoid paying as often as possible. I don't want to subsidize Bechtel, for example – that's the lovely downtown San Francisco company that received a $680 million contract to " rebuild" Iraq just as the bombs started dropping in 2002.

Luckily, bus rider solidarity in San Francisco is back in full swing. Just the other day, one of these young men of color who you seem so afraid of held the back door open for at least 10 or 15 passengers, including two gum-chewing preppy white teenagers, a Latina woman with two kids, a middle-aged white guy with a skateboard, an old Asian woman, and me (I'm a white faggot flamer with gender problems, in case you were wondering).

As far as passengers receiving verbal harassment, I agree that this is a problem. Just recently, I got on the bus and this old white woman said to me: your daddy raped you and that's why you're a faggot. I said: my daddy raped me, but that's not why I'm a faggot. I thought that would shut her up, but I was wrong. She said it again: your daddy raped you and that's why you're a faggot. I told her: your problem is that you start eating shit, and then you just couldn't stop. She got off the bus. Took care of the problem.

Anyway, my point is that verbal harassment comes from absolutely every direction on the bus—it's an unfortunate example of what happens when a bunch of people are forced to ride in a sardine can, and they take their aggression out on each other. If only everyone went down to City Hall and started screaming at the fucking Mayor, maybe we'd actually have free bus service (and a real fucking subway!). Though I must admit that when I get on the bus and there are like three drops of rain outside, but everyone's giving California realness so they've got every single window on the bus shut—well, then I'm about to scream OPEN THE FUCKING WINDOW I'M ABOUT TO SUFFOCATE WITH ALL YOUR PERFUME AND BAR BREATH AND MEAT SWEAT AND STALE VOMIT STENCH AND LITTER BOX ODORAMA! But that's just me.

As far as graffiti, sure the fumes are pretty intense, but the girls have got to decorate! My advice is to bring your own markers and join in on the festivities. And if someone's radio is up at full blast just to annoy everyone, well then get up and start dancing—that'll bring the volume down.

But, more importantly, does anyone have any tips for jamming the fare machines? Let me know.

Love,

—Mattilda

Dear MRR—

This is a question for you folks at the punk rock bible. I recently realized a long held dream to put out a record and start a record label by helping a friend release their debut EP. We decided to go the vinyl-only route and only pressed 500 copies. Because of the low run and our own poverty we were able to send out only a few promos, were lucky to get distribution and are still figuring out how to get the word out in order to sell the records. So it kinda pissed me off when I found a copy of the fruit of our labors in the used bin at a local record store for $3 only a month after the record came out. We screen printed the sleeves by hand so I recognized it as a promo copy. Isn't the punk rock/indie world supposed to be a community where we help each other out? It doesn't help our efforts to sell the records, which are priced for us to barely break even, when folks are selling one the few promo copies we sent out for the price of a soda. Doesn't it make more sense for the person who didn't want to keep the record to give it to a friend who might like it? Like "This band sounds like the Buzzcocks, John likes the Buzzcocks, maybe he'll like this record." Or "I don't like this record but it reminds me of the Birthday Party and Judy owns every Nick Cave bootleg, maybe she'd be into it." I'd gladly buy someone a soda if it keeps them from selling away record they got for free if that's what they want. What's the punk rock ethic on this sort of thing? Would Ian Mackaye sell a free record from a fellow punk label in order to buy a candy bar? Would Todd Burdette?

Thanks,

Ben Howell

howellben@gmail.com

MRR—

As some of you may know, Richard "Bomer" (Bomber) Manzullo of RKL passed away recently.

I saw Bomer on the first RKL North American tour in '86 at a shit hole called Sound Sea's in downtown El Paso, TX. Before the show...me, some friends, and RKL did some skating and then I interviewed them for a zine I had back then called *Mengele Report*. They were so nice and very cool. Bomer was on fire that night...as was Chris and Barry switching off individualy form leads to rhythm, back and forth. They were one of the tightest bands I had ever scene then and still today.

I was lucky enough to have Bomber sign a RKL skate deck for me less than two weeks ago, and in the great spirit and joy that Bomer represented and was he simply wrote, "Much love, Bomer." What a great guy he was to the end...

—Scooter

Malt Soda Records

MRR—

I am writing because sometimes I feel that the negativity that permeates the punk scene is so enchanting that it is easy to forget why we belong to this crazy community in the first place. Instead of squabbling about our differences, it would be far more productive to focus our negative energy on those who would corrupt and sell out our scene than those who are trying—one way or the other—to foster and support DIY punk and hardcore. What's more, we could spend our time on rad DIY projects that our fellow punks could be into. In short: less internet beef and petty bickering and more fun, fun, fun, please. Thanks for listening,

—Jane Dangerous

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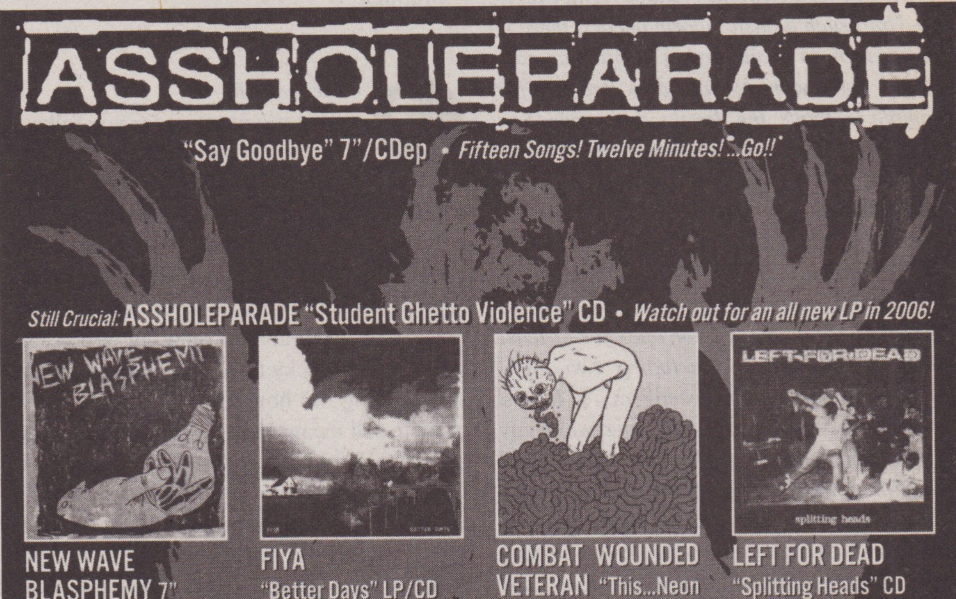

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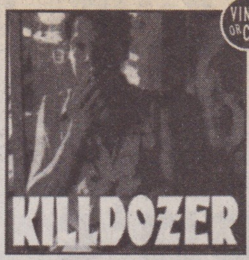

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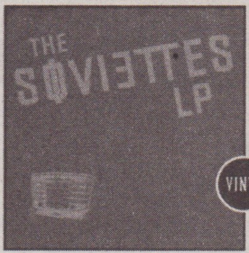

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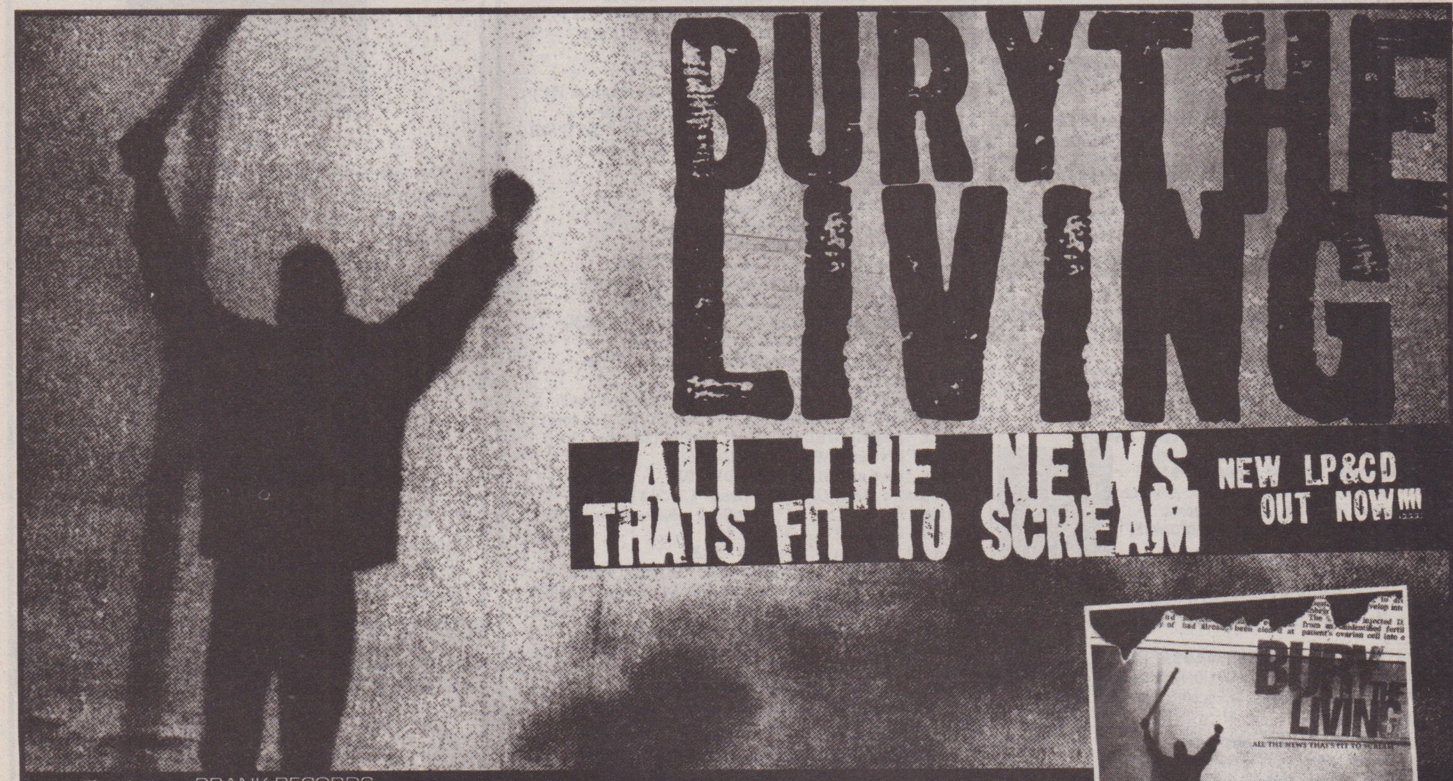
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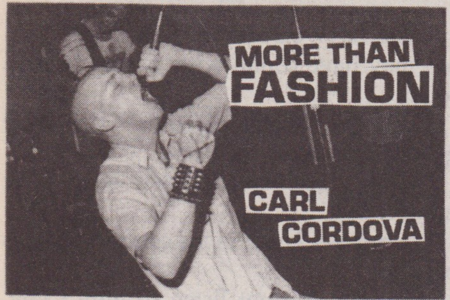


Expensive Sound

I have always believed that punk and hardcore should be a place for everyone regardless of race, gender, sexual preference, or class. I hope this is something we can all agree on. Yet living in one of the most expensive cities in the country, I have started paying attention to the issue of class in relation to producing music (and for the sake of the larger argument, art in general).

Starting a band is an expensive venture. Being from an affluent family gives you a decided advantage. Having a good career (or well-off parents) that afford you things like nice equipment and a van already puts you one step head of the game. Maintenance costs such as equipment and van upkeep, renting practice spaces, and fronting cash for merchandise is very costly for someone trying to hold down a dead-end job. Things like recording at a studio, and self-releasing your own CD/record is something that takes a lot of expendable income. I am not saying that being in a band hasn't always been expensive, but I feel that it has become almost unattainable for a lot of people living in larger cities like San Francisco and New York City.

Economic strife can sometimes provide for some ripping punk and hardcore (but it is by no means a necessary ingredient). For decades, cities across the country that had vibrant hardcore/punk scenes made possible by the presence of low-priced spaces, have been in a lull. Unfortunately, these same starving artists/musicians gentrified the community for later generations. But my argument isn't about why the landscape has changed, but about the fact that no one seems to notice or care.

In a scene where the message is supposed to be more important than the music, there are questions worth asking: Has punk rock become a rich kid's hobby? Should we be stealing our instruments like the punks did on Quincy, or listening exclusively to working class Oi? Finally, does being from a lower economic background give you the same access into this music scene as someone who is much more well-off? I would say sure it does, provided you don't want to be the people actually producing the music.

Things to Spend Your Parents' Money On

On a less serious note, there are a lot of great releases slated for this new year. Coincidentally, all of them are coming out on labels from Cali.

Rich and Steve from INSTED have just started a new label called New Music Revolution. Besides the recently released INSTED *Live at CBGB's* CD, they are working on an international hardcore comp called *They Came For Your Milk Money.* I am really excited for this as it contains some tracks by some great bands including THE FIRST STEP, INSTED, SAY GOODBYE, THE GEEKS, and TRUST. Also included on this CD are three exclusive tracks from a new project band with Roger Miret from AGNOSTIC FRONT on vocals, and Steve, Bear, and Rich from INSTED writing the music. They are called the ALLIGATORS, and if you miss *Victim in Pain*-era AGNOSTIC FRONT, I would recommend picking this up just for these songs alone. There is also an INSTED DVD in the works. You can contact these guys through www.newmusicrevolution.net, as well as www.myspace.com/xinstedx.

After having a kid and taking some time off, Igby and Mankind Records is back on the map. He is currently working on the NO REPLY discography. This CD will contain everything this Los Angeles band recorded, including their demo, EP, split EP with LIFES HALT, and comp tracks. For anyone who was a fan of LIFES HALT, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?, or even SUICIDE FILE, check this out. Mankind will also be releasing a full-length by Houston's PHANTOM PAINS (ex FAR FROM BREAKING), who are slated to record at the end of January. There is also talk of a ONE STEP AHEAD discography (Cali's answer to VERBAL ASSAULT), as well as a NERVE AGENTS DVD in the somewhat near future. Mankind Records should have their website up and running by the end of January, but until then you can check out some mp3s at www.myspace.com/mankindrecords.

Speaking of NERVE AGENTS, Eric Ozenne is starting a new band with Timmy Chunks from TOKEN ENTRY and REDEMPTION 87. Just recently, they completed their lineup with the addition of Mark Hayworth (INSIDE OUT/HARDSTANCE) on bass. Whatever and whenever they record, this will also be coming out on Mankind Records. Here is a letter from Eric

Dear People—

I have crawled out of the tree-tops to inform you that I have yet again, begun a new band...only this time it is actually happening. Gary Gutfeld, Timmy Chunks, and I have joined up again (not to do Redemption 87 in any shape or form)...but to do an all-new band...yes it will be a hardcore/punk band, that is the intention. We are doing this merely to have fun and once again bring our input into the music scene. Does anybody really care? Who the hell wants to see the kind of hardcore and punk that we offer? In 2005 are we kidding ourselves? Probably. Does anybody want to see the geriatric community in action...uh? Well, someone once said ...if I can reach just one...one will do.

O' how the Oceans and Seas are filled with such wisdom.

—Eric Ozenne

So there you have it. It looks like 2006 is going to be a great year. Please send all records/demos to: 746 Baker St, SF, CA 94115. Emailat ih8thekids@gmail.com

ANYONE CAN BE THE BASTARD
MANTOOTH

Contrived Metaphors for Alcatraz

I am nothing special. I am what you may call an "average Joe." I enjoy drinking black coffee. I enjoy staring at the wall. I enjoy drinking, driving, *killing*. And like any "average Joe" I spend most of my waking life at a job that I fucking hate, trying to convince myself that there isn't raw sewage coursing through my petrified veins. Part of my day, before I spend my night slinging Polo shirts at the Gap, consists of me answering telephones and pushing papers at an apartment rental agency. My job description, which I have never seen but assume reads only "dog ass," may not seem so bad, but like any person who works in an office performing such menial office tasks, I will tell you that it is the most soul draining experience I've ever voluntarily committed myself to in my whole pathetic life. There is only one computer for the entire place, and it is usually taken by my co-worker who hates my guts for no other reason that I can ascertain besides my dangerous good looks and fuck-all attitude. She cannot stand my freedom. She is the Red Skull to my Captain America. Yes. She is the product of the Nazis.

My eight hours at this place are usually spent in the following position: elbows on desk, fingertips on temples, eyes staring at empty cubicle wall, and waiting for my brain to burst though my skull and fart in my face. Now eight hours may be a bit of an exaggeration; sometimes I get up to go to the bathroom for half an hour. No doubt they all think I'm getting my rocks off in the shitter on company time. Little do they know I'm just sitting on the pot in much the same position as described above, forming contrived metaphors for Alcatraz in my atrophied brain, which, as I mentioned above, is right now trying to escape from my cranium and harm my physical person.

By the time I'm done with my 12 to 15 hour work day, I stumble out into the streets and contemplate walking into traffic. It hasn't happened yet because I'm convinced that I am invincible, cursed to forever trudge through an infinity of humanity. And so I relegate myself to the task of being that neighborhood crazy man who won't stop staring at you as you walk down the street. My hope is that one day some yuppie will brutalize me mercilessly and leave my tattered carcass in the street to be digested in the gutter. My spirit would then enter the astral plane with such great minds as Nietzsche, Einstein, and Larry Bird. They will see me arrive and there will be the sound of a needle being pulled off a record. I will be escorted out of the astral plane and sent back down to my proper place at the rental company, on the shitter, wondering what would happen if I stuck a letter opener in my pee-hole.

The other day, after a particularly mind numbing day, I was sitting on the bus listening to Pissed Jeans' "Shallow." A couple sat in front of me and proceeded to talk "baby-talk." You know, the whole, "You're just the cutest bunny-boo I have ever seen in my whole life *a booshaboosheeboo*! Yes you are! Tehe!" Then they started rubbing their snotty noses together and wiping their tongues all over their respective faces. I just stared at them. I could hear slurping and baby talk over the song "Wachovia" and it just made me more angry. The man noticed and glanced back occasionally. Finally he turned around fully and I just flipped him off. He quickly turned around and his girlfriend, confused as to why he stopped cuddling, turned around as well. I flipped her off to, staring off into space. When she turned around, I didn't put my finger down until they got off the bus.

Anyhow, the job isn't entirely bad. My boss and manager of all properties is Russian and out of his goddamn mind. It's a bit comforting to know that this place has the same effect on other people besides myself. Anyhow, he will occasionally and randomly have brief conversations with me that soothe my jangled nerves for at least a few minutes. Keep in mind that when he refers to me as "Craig," I'm not sure if it's his accent or if he really thinks my name is Craig. We'll refer to him as "Frank."

***

"Craig," he starts as he's typing something into his palm pilot and not turning to face me, "joor parents…zey love you?"

"Uh, sure, I hope so! Ha! Ha?"

"Iz good. Joo love joor parents?"

"Um…yeah."

"Iz good."

***

"Joo know what goes on in prison, right?"

"Umm..."

"Zey got them funky guys in there!"

"They like to dance?"

"Ha! Ha! No...I mean....zey do strange tings to your....*anatomy*."

***

"Joo know why Na-pole-ee-an Bow-na-pahrt loss ze war, right?"

"The war?"

"Yes, ze war."

"No, I don't know why."

"Is because he fell in love with polock-woman!"

***

I came into the office with a bag of caramels and I offered him some.

"Zese are not very good for joo, no?"

"Yeah, but they taste good."

He stares off into space for a second. Rubs his chin. Crinkles his brow.

"Sometimes...sometimes I like to think, how you say, philosophically. Joo know...is better to live *dangerously* and *happy* for only tventy years, or is better to live *safely* and *unhappily* for vun hundred tventy years. It make you think, no?"

"Yeah..."

***

"Vun day you might be like me, Craig. Joo may have condo with jacuzzi in bedroom!"

"Did you just say 'condom?'" this other guy calls out from the back.

"Listen, good-lookin'! Joo keep your mind clean!"

"I seen 'em layin' in his condo!" he calls out again.

"Ha! Ha! Joo not listen to him, Craig. He's liar."

***

"You know, it's funny you mentioned polish women," I said one day

"Oh yes? Why?"

"I visited Krakow a few years ago. It was really nice."

"Ooooh...joo know what makes Krakow famous?"

"The pope?"

"Ha! The pope? No! Is ze *ladies*!"

"Ha ha...yep...they're attractive over there."

"Just do not end up like Na-pole-ee-an Bow-na-pahrt, OK Craig?"

"Yes sir."

***

"Joo know vaht zey say? I can get no respect. Rodney Dange-her-fieldt...rest his soul!"

***

One day he calls me from his cell phone while he's driving.

"Craig! Is very important!"

"Um...OK."

"Vaht is vord for 'sing soulfolly'??"

"Croon?"

"Yes! It is fitting!"

"Anything else?"

"*Shit!* It does not match ze other letters!!"

***

"Craig....come in here! I need private talk to joo!"

"What's the matter?"

"Joo from east, no?"

"Asia?"

"Ha ha! I mean from Philly region."

"Oh...yeah...just outside."

"Joo some kind of bird fan?"

"Huh?"

"Joo know. Eagle. Ravens. Tose kinds of

bums!"

"Ha! No...I'm a Steelers fan."

"Goot. You still have job."

***

"Hey goot looking, I ever tell you about vacky tenant I evict?"

"No..."

"Ziss guy...he move into apartment I own and he never pay rent. Never penny. Month and month go by and I never see no money from ziss fella. So I file to have him evicted. Ze guy never shows to court. So I get control over ze property. Ven I open up place...it *full* of clothes. New pants. New shirts. Tousands and tousands. All have receipts so I know not stolen...but still...so *veird*."

"So what did you do with all that stuff?"

"I give avay! I am very generous, no? Like *modern Santa*!"

"Ha ha! I guess so!

"But not drawer full of rings. I must look goot, joo know?"

***

If you would like some kind of context to these conversations, I assure you there is none.

Endnotes:

gregory.mantooth@gmail.com

"Hey, Goot Looking....vy are joo a single guy?"

"I'm ashamed of my cum."

RaNSoM
NoTE$
by Erika Ransom

Notes from the Black Book (Part 3)

20 October. Thursday. Finland.

9 am at the tiny Ryanair airport in Tampere, waiting for the plane to London. I found refuge in the cafe upstairs, looking out the large windows. Coffee, steam, and smoke drift like exhaust from the plastic-topped table in front of me, and I scribble for a moment in my black book, feeling the long night behind my eyes.

Above the field of tarmac is a rough charcoal sky, thick clouds moving in the wind. The sun is low, a blackened crimson eye, glowing behind the clouds like a morning full moon. Pine trees edge the runway and my words crumble onto paper.

I am exhausted. Only two hours of sleep started this day, as the band left at 5 am to catch the ferry at Turku. The coffee warms me, but I smell of the stench of tour, a cocktail of stale smoke, punk shows, sweat, dirt, van rides, hash, and lived-in clothes.

It was hard to say goodbye as everyone walked towards the van without me. Suddenly, I was on my own again.

Sitting in the airport a few hours later, I try to capture images of the rush of days, being on tour with SIGNAL LOST through Scandinavia.

17 October. Monday. Helsinki.

The first SIGNAL LOST show in Finland was held at the Vouritalo, an ancient firehouse tower that was squatted for many years. It was an epicenter for infamous punk shows in Helsinki, until the roof fell in.

Over the last year repairs have been made, and once again shows are being held there. The building is a stone tower, on the top of a hill, reached by a narrow road that cuts through a small forest. The trees and fields that surround the tower create a convenient distance between the squat and its nearest neighbors. The community generally supports the space, as the punks kicked out the junkies who were living in the firehouse ruins. However, the Vouritalo, as with most autonomous spaces, still struggles against the city to exist.

The room used for concerts was up a flight of dark cement stairs, and through a large door. The room had a low stage built into one wall, and it was the first show of the tour that reminded me of a Boston basement. Small, intimate, and dirty, packed with dancing punks. Everything felt relaxed and fun. I was surprised to notice that the show was full of plain leather jackets and long hair—metal punk all the way!

FORÇA MACABRA was good, the guitar solos were flying, and Nordic head banging was in full effect. SIGNAL LOST once again had a good set, and it was more fun to see them in a small room, rather than the large stages of the past weekend.

The bands ended, I packed my video gear away, and before I knew it, general drunken chaos blew in with the cold night breeze.

Late night on the Helsinki highway, Philip had pulled over onto an on-ramp and stopped the van. We didn't know where to go, so no use going forward.

Kato is screaming at Marku in Japanese: "#$&#! **!!@! !!@#!"

I guessed he was yelling something to the effect of: "Marku's drunk ass better remember where his friend lives. *Now!*"

Somehow, Kato from Japan and Philip from Poland navigated through the Helsinki streets while a crew of Americans and their Finnish host just hoped for the best, and we eventually found the places we were staying for the night. Ashley, Jasmine, Marku, Lydia, and I hung out before going to sleep, talking, and eating what was left of our road snacks.

Early that morning, we heard knocking on the apartment door. Ashley woke up and answered the door—there was Marku standing in the hall in his boxers! Locked out of his apartment. We don't know how that happened…

Ah, good times. Thanks again to Marku for showing us around Helsinki, Otto for setting things up, and everyone who made the show fun.

15 October. Saturday. Uppsala, Sweden.

There were three excellent things about this day.

The first excellent thing that happened was seeing TO WHAT END? at the Ungdomens Hus. The show had been a long festival of mostly d-beat thrash bands, sounding much the same. As the hours went by, I was bored, tired, and just hoping for the show to end.

Then, TO WHAT END? blew me away. I videotaped most of their set, and really enjoyed their music and energy.

The second excellent thing of the day was meeting up after the show with Gsuss and Katie, two punks from Bradford, U.K. After enduring the too-long show, I definitely wanted a beer. And, who better to find a good pub than two Brits?

Soon, we were drinking pints at a packed bar, squeezed into three chairs we had found open at the back of the room.

It turned out we had stolen someone's seats, but the generous punk Swedes decided not to kick us out, and instead laughed at the rip-off tourist beer the bartender sold us.

We started talking, and as the pints went down I soon found out loads more about Swedish punk and the history of Uppsala hardcore. One very interesting thing they told me was how the Swedish government gives money to "clubs" and this is how many punk bands are financed. A "club," from what I understood (through the din of the pub and the translation) is any group of people who want to do a cultural activity together. The activity can be almost anything, like knitting or hiking—or even starting a punk band. As a club, it is easy to get funding from the government.

Punks sign up as a club, and receive money from the state to buy equipment, a P.A., or rent a practice space.

Unbelievable!

The third excellent thing about this day was going back to the Ungdomens after the pub closed. Upstairs, the room where I had left my backpack, and where everyone else was already sleeping, was absolutely pitch black inside. No light at all. And for the first time on tour, I didn't have my flashlight when I needed it. Damn. And I really didn't want to be the drunken asshole that woke everyone up trying to find my things.

But, hey ho! Looking around, wondering what to do, the next room had a long marble counter, perhaps part of an old coat check. What luck!

Ah, I stretched out on the marble counter, with my jacket as a pillow, fully dressed with my boots on, and had an excellent sleep for the night. Punk rock!

16 October. Sunday.
North Baltic Sea.

When I'm traveling, I often open my eyes thinking, "Where the hell am I?" The next instant I remember, and the day begins.

This night I woke up several times in the dark, holding onto a metal bar with one hand thinking, "Where the hell am I?"

"I'm on the very edge of a bunk bed, six feet off the floor. In the bottom of a boat traveling to Finland. Somewhere on the Baltic Sea."

That afternoon I had been standing outside the van with Philip in the parking lot of the Stockholm boatyard, shaking in the cold. The Mariela, the ship we would take to Finland, loomed large, as tall as a nine-story building, parked next to the dock. The trip would take about fifteen hours, and we'd arrive in Helsinki at 9 a.m.

We parked the van in the ship's hold, along with a long line of other cars, tour buses and delivery trucks. Then we found our cabin, on Deck 2, one deck below the cars, and according to the diagram, below sea level. As Philip said, "It is better not to think of where we are." The room was tiny, small for four people, and there were seven of us. But it was nice to have a room to sleep in, and there was even a shower.

The ship had a cheap casino with seedy bars, slot machines, souvenir and duty-free shops. Even a small movie theater, restaurants, and a cafe. Worn red carpet was everywhere, and the stairs eventually led up to the observation deck where I could escape the crowds and get some air.

At night, I watched the dark waves below, gleaming in the ship's sideboard lights. It was beautiful, windy and icy cold. Alone, I wrapped my scarf tight around my neck, glad to be alive and out on the water, looking at stars on the way to Finland.

Later in the evening, the clubs filled up with people drinking expensive cocktails and gambling, and drunks stumbled down the halls. Ashley and Chris went out on the dance floor in their pajamas. Punk!

I slept for a long time, then woke up at 8 a.m., dressed, and went up on deck. I watched the coastline slide by, and felt refreshed. As the Mariela came into harbor, we all stood on deck and took in mixture of old and modern buildings that create the Helsinki skyline. We had arrived in Finland!

19 October. Wednesday.
Tampere, Finland.

The show was in a punk club, the Vastavirta. The place was well run, and had a medium-sized stage and lights and a big P.A. It also was a comfortable and warm place to hang out before the show started, an appreciated oasis from the cold and grey day outside.

There was a bar along one wall, and at the opposite end of the hall from the stage there was a corner filled with fanzines to read, chess and other games, radical books, and soft couches. There was coffee and tea (and even soymilk) and a computer where people could use the Internet for free. Hell ya.

We arrived in the afternoon, and spent hours waiting for the show to start. I caught up on email, read, relaxed on the couch, and slowly went a little stir crazy.

Outside the weather was bone-chilling, and the club was set on a highway by the bay. We walked up a nearby hill with Otto and took in the view—a sky of steel clouds, and below, pine trees following the twisting edges of the bay, dark water snaking out into the distance.

When the show started, the place soon filled up with punks and noise. KYKLOOPIEN SUKUPUUTTO was very fast with brutal blast beats, and WASTED played classic street punk. SIGNAL LOST had a great set, the mood was good, and a crew of traveling Mexican punks along with drunken Finnish punks made for a rowdy pit. Ashley sang in the crowd, and I videotaped it all from the side of the stage. So much fun!

22 October. Saturday.
London Anarchist Bookfair.

From the beginning of my trip, I had been looking forward to attending the 24th annual London Anarchist Bookfair, the largest and longest running anarchist book fair in the world. This year, the event was held at the Voluntary Sector Resource Centre, an older building on Holloway Road.

By 8:45 a.m., two rooms of empty tables had turned into a sea of anarchist and radical books, videos, patches, posters, t-shirts, banners, pamphlets, and flyers of every description. By noon, the small aisles between the tables were full with people, and the place was totally packed. There were speakers and workshops also going on at the same time, and a room showing videos.

I helped with the Active Distribution table all day, selling pamphlets and t-shirts and talking to random people who came up to the table. I also took breaks to smoke, walk around the tables, and look for anarcha-feminists.

The highlight was talking to women from the Brighton Women's Health Collective, who I found to be doing great work. But besides them, and the Global Women's Strike, I really didn't find other groups organizing with a radical feminist perspective.

The lack of women's groups was discouraging, as I was expecting more from such a large gathering. But, it only reminds me how important it is to keep bringing up women's issues and examining how patriarchy is a key part of the capitalist system. The connections between race, class, and gender should not be swept under the rug, especially by anarchists.

At the end of the day, taking a break outside before time to pack up, I suddenly heard the sound of breaking glass!

About six feet in front of me, someone ran up and kicked in the headlight of a cop car. Smash! A minute later, all hell broke loose.

The cops, a large crew with riot gear and carrying shields, started pushing people and yelling at us and threatening people with billy clubs. People were yelling at the cops and not wanting to move, and the whole situation seemed like a deliberate attempt by the police to antagonize people and start a fight.

As soon as the mayhem started, I ran back inside and grabbed my video camera. I videotaped the cops, hoping it would persuade them to be less violent, as they were being recorded on camera. I also wanted to have footage if someone needed it later on for legal defense. I saw one person arrested, held on the ground, and then taken off in a police wagon, and heard that other people were arrested as well.

What a way to end the book fair. Fucking pigs pushing us down the street.

But, somehow fitting for the times we live in, don't you think?

You can read the whole story on London IndyMedia. What a fiasco! For more information on the London Anarchist Bookfair, go to www.anarchistbookfair.org.

27 October. Thursday. 56@.

Sitting on the old couch at 56@. The infoshop is closed, and I am playing BORN/DEAD loud on the stereo, writing in my journal, drinking tea.

Outside, Jon and Chris are using a grinder against the brick wall, and the door is closed to cut down on the dust. They are working on a new roof over the bike workshop area, at the moment cutting a groove into the outside wall to attach supports.

Jon, Chris, and I, and a handful of other 56@ volunteers, have been here all day, and all day yesterday, working on the roof. My part helping out was minimal, as I feared I'd be pushing my luck standing on top of the wall or balancing on the roof while using power tools. My solidarity extended to ground support—handing up tools, holding ladders, getting nails, moving infoshop stuff out of the way, finding screwdrivers, and occasionally making tea.

At the moment, there was nothing for me to do, and I browsed the extensive collection of books, picking up *Living My Life* by Emma Goldman, old issues of *Freedom* (the longest running anarchist journal, started in the 1880s in London), *Mutual Aid* by Kropotkin, and my absolute favorite personal fanzine of the moment, *Morgenmuffel*.

(Aside: *Morgenmuffel* is written by Isy, a self-described "usually unemployed, feminist, German-Korean, drunken, urban, anarchist living in Brighton." Isy, describes in cartoons and words, her travels, going to protests, life in general, and the joys, challenges, and funny adventures of her Anarchist Teapot collective, that provides food for radical gatherings. Basically, this zine rocks my world.)

Looking at all the information that lined the walls, I could have spent days there, just reading, drinking tea, and listening to music.

The 56@ infoshop has been in the same space for some 15 years, located at 56A Cramton Street. Most of that time the space was squatted, and only more recently has the collective started paying rent.

The heart of the infoshop is one small room, only as big as my bedroom back in Boston. Every inch of wall space is covered by books and literature, except for one large window above the couch. Out of all these great books, there are only a few for sale. The others are "for reading only." It is like my favorite radical library, covering all the topics I want to read, a wide selection of authors and subjects. There is a couch, chairs, and a bench, and people come and go while the shop is open—reading and talking and hanging out.

I love the archives, an extensive collection of anarchist history, protest, organizing, and theory. Narrow paper boxes line the walls and hold magazines, pamphlets, news clippings and writings from all over the world.

It is inspiring, just looking at all the labels, thinking of what the information represents. There are so many points of resistance around the world! So many records of past actions, and points of view!

There are boxes with information from actions such as "London May Day 2000-2003," "Anti-IMF (80s)," and "Seattle WTO 1999." Three very long shelves are full of boxes of UK and international anarchist groups from every country I can think of, one interesting box labeled, "Anarchist Groups: China/Cuba/Czech." There are also many shelves of boxes labeled by a wide variety of information by general subject or struggle, including "Animal Liberation," "Squatting," "Police," "Armed Struggle," "Queer," "Situationist," "Eco-protest" and two shelves dedicated to "Women."

If you are going to London, start by going to the 56@. You can find out more information about them at www.56a.org.uk.

28 October. Friday.
London Critical Mass.

The police had threatened to shut down Critical Mass—creating momentum for what many said was the largest Critical Mass in London history. It was amazing, being part of the huge crowd of people on bikes—an estimated 1,500 people riding together through the city!

I have some great visual memories of hundreds of people on bikes in front of Big Ben, the Queen's Palace, and completely taking over the streets in front of Parliament. Lots of people were dressed up in Halloween costumes, and there were many demons and undead riding bikes, telling the car culture to fuck off!

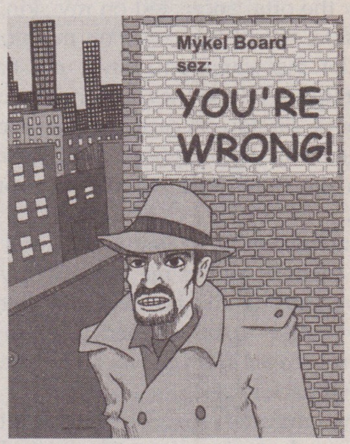
Now.

Wait. Where the hell am I again?

In Boston. Getting ready to go to San Francisco. I've been at the computer all day, typing, the deadline is here, and it is once again time for me to end this column. As always, there are so many more things I wanted to write about, but alas, I've already rambled on for far too long.

A big cheers and hallo to everyone in Europe and London who I had the pleasure of hanging out with. Until next time, I miss you! Especially thanks to Signal Lost for taking me along on tour, Jon and Marta for the adventures in London, and kisses to the cute crusty in Bremen.

In love and resistance, Erika



We live on spaceship Earth. We are its astronauts.
—Jim Bell, San Diego Mayoral Candidate

It's dark. The tile is cold under my cheek. I can feel the crisscross indentation where it presses its filthy pattern into my skin. Something sticky drips from my mouth. Something else sticky drips from my nose, mingling nose hairs with mustache hairs, crusting over my upper lip.

I slowly return to consciousness. After my face, the rest of my body regains sensations. My left hand jerks, like a frog's leg in a school experiment. It hits something hard. Eyes closed, I feel the smooth coldness, following it upward as it curves out. The toilet. It must be the toilet.

My stomach contracts like I've been punched. Something bubbles through my guts, dribbles out my asshole, down over the back of my leg. I need a Monster. Then it's dark again.

In five minutes—or five hours—consciousness returns. I try to lift my head from the tile, fighting the gummy viscosity between my cheek and the floor. I open my eyes just enough to allow a faint outline: toilet base, porn mags, plunger, white toilet brush with tiny brown clumps clinging to the bristles.

I'm naked, curled like a comma. The pain in my stomach slightly less than before, I try to stretch my legs. *Blau!* I slam my toe against the bathtub. A scream mutes itself against the floor.

Without standing, I swivel my body through the muck and roll up and over into the tub. Feeling above me, I reach for the handle and turn. Ice cold water pours over my head. *Jeezus fuck!* Reaching up, I turn the other tap and adjust to lukewarm. When just the right temperature washes over my forehead, I reach up to turn on the shower.

Lying there at the bottom of the tub, I let the water play over my body. It washes away the offal encrusted on my skin. First my side, then I turn over on my stomach and let the water pour over my back. I scoot up slightly so the shower can work its magic a bit lower, carrying the excreted nutrients off my body, and down the drain. Then the other side. Then I turn on my back.

The force of the water on the good parts frees them. It allows me to spray my own shower, strong and beer colored, onto my hairy belly—to be washed away by the forceful stream from the metal nozzle.

I fall back to sleep.

Five minutes—or five hours later—I wake up drowning. I'm going to die. Water is everywhere. Covering my mouth and nose. There's no escape. I spit it out. Immediately, my mouth and nose fill up again. I twist away.

Oh, I get it. I turned over in my sleep and was drowning in an inch and a half of water on the bottom of the tub.

Now, I'm fully awake. I don't know how long I've been under the shower. My skin is pink and wrinkled like a deflated balloon. I can stand up now... not easily... but with the help of the sides of the tub and the wall, I work my way to my feet. I survey the bathroom. Gobs of food-speckled white cover the floor. There's a yellow puddle near the toilet. A thin strip of dark brown lies halfway to the tub.

I shut off the water and pick my way through the liquid obstacle course to the door. Stumbling out, I turn the corner and head toward the promise of rest that is my bed. My eyes still not focusing properly, I approach the bed. On it is what looks like a huge, pink, hairy kidney, curled on the black sheets.

From the kidney comes the sound of regular deep breathing. Uh oh. I brought something home last night. If only I can remember.

Shit! Another one of those nights. Well, I buttered my bread, so I've got to sleep in it. I pad over to the stove in the kitchen.

I take down the cream of wheat and put on the kettle.

"You want coffee with your cereal?" I shout to the form on the bed.

Yuck? I know, but it's the right thing to do. This whole column is about the right thing to do.

Actually, there are two kinds of "right things." One is morally right, like helping old ladies across the street. Or cooking breakfast for last night's mistake.

EXAMPLE 1: I used to have a best friend. Several years ago he stopped being my friend because I wrote in a column that he had become "too LA."

Even after an entire column of apology. Even after sending him my favorite truck-driving record to say "I'm sorry," he refused to talk to me. Accepting a gift, but not an apology... it pissed me off.

When GK Press published my Mongolia book I sent copies to everyone who helped me with it. I included a form letter thanking the recipient and asking for any help they could give hustling the book.

My friend-turned-enemy helped me with the book back in the friend days. He showed it to several LA film makers, but could not persuade Brad Pitt to play *me*.

I thought about it for a while, and decided to send him a book and form letter just like everybody else. I was still pissed as hell at him, but he helped me, so it was *the right thing*.

The second kind of right thing is not morally right, but *situationally* right. It's making the right decision. Like investing in a stock just before it becomes the next Microsoft. In cards, it's discarding the right cards and holding the right cards.

EXAMPLE 2: My 70-year-old cousin who lives near San Francisco is gonna make Thanksgiving dinner. I have enough frequent flyer miles to get there for the $20 tax the airline charges to use those miles. I also have a fistful of free car day coupons at Hertz. If I turn the whole trip into a book-selling tour, I can make some bucks, see my cousin, have a turkey dinner with minimal family squabbles, and visit my West Coast pals.

I can fly to San Diego, rent a car using my free tickets. Drive to LA then San Francisco, and return to New York from San Francisco.

In San Diego, I can see my college pal John who I took more LSD with than any twelve Deadheads. He now works for Fox News. Bob Beyerle, who used to do Vinyl Communications records, might set up a show or two.

In LA, I can visit Leslie, my former next door neighbor in New York. Plus, I can visit the home of Monster. The energy drink that makes Red Bull seem like Red Little Lamb. If you don't know Monster, you're probably stuck on a baby drug... like methadrine. Wadda wimp!

Monster brews its magic right outside LA. I can do a day reading (Jennifer Blowdryer gave me the name of "an underground spoken-word promoter"), then hit the Monster factory and try to convince them to sponsor my national book tour.

After that, on to San Francisco, where my pal Jim will set up a book release party in an old theater on Mission Street.

The trip should cost about $100 for two weeks—less than I'd spend in New York. If I can set up a few readings: San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco... with only five books sold at each reading, I'll make a profit. Sounds like the right thing.

You got the examples. Now let's look at how far doing the right thing— in either sense— will get you.

I call Delta. No problem. Fly to San Diego. Return from San Francisco. $20 charge for tax and security fees. Not bad. I've paid more for someone to manipulate my anal cavity.

Then I call Hertz. That's when things begin to go wrong.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Board..." says the Alabama-twinged voice on the other end of the line. I know there's going to be trouble when someone calls me *Mr. Board*. "Those coupons do not allow returns except to the place of rental."

"Can I pay a drop-off fee or something?" I ask.

"I'm afraid not," says the Southern Belle on the other end of the line. "If you want the car I can give it to you for $310 for the week."

"Shit," I say politely. Then hang up.

Damn. OK. Change of plans. I'll call Greyhound and find out if I can take a bus from San Diego to San Francisco with a stopover in LA.

"Sure," says the even more southern voice on the phone, "if you buy the ticket now, you can use it any time within 365 days. If the bus stops in LA you can just get back on and go to San Francisco."

(Aside: What is it with the south and service calls? Is Mississippi the new Delhi? Is corporate America tired of people complaining about incomprehensible Indians? Has globalism come full circle? Back to the Bible belt?)

The ticket costs $49. The Greyhound lady asks me for my schedule. Since I have a year to use the ticket, I make one up, planning to change it later. I give Mary Sue Beth my credit card number, hope for another few book sales, pack a hundred pounds of books and go to the airport to take the plane to San Diego.

I know the suitcase is heavy and, as I remember, there is a baggage limit. Is it 70 pounds? So how bad can it be? Ten cents a pound? Twenty cents?

"I'm sorry, Mr. Board," says the airline clerk, a meek little man who reminds me of Mr. Bean. "There's a 50 pound weight limit on the bags. Your bag weighs 97 pounds."

"I understand," I tell him. "What's the extra charge?"

"A hundred dollars," he says.

I choke.

"Are you all right, Mr. Board?" he says. "Do you want to pay for the overcharge?"

"What can I do?" I ask him. "Do I have any alternative?"

He shrugs. "I can give you a receipt."

I hand over my credit card. There goes the free trip. Pop! Gone in a suitcase.

Holding back the tears, I sign the charge slip. Mr. Bean lugs the bag to the conveyer belt. I head for security, hoping someone attractive will want to explore my inner cavities. No one does.

My pal Brian meets me at the airport in San Diego. We're gonna meet John and then go out for some Mexican food. You *cannot* get good Mexican food in New York. (I stick to Mexican food the entire trip. A flatulent cloud, like a silent friend, follows me continually.)

The first reading is in the rented-out living room of Jim Bell, a local political activist and Green Party candidate. When I go in to check out the space, there's Jim, tall, with a grey beard. He sits in an office typing away at his computer. Around him, covering every available section of wall space, are posters for vegetarianism, sustainable development, save the children, and the quote at the beginning of this column.

Is this guy gonna actually *be* at my reading? What's he gonna think about my politics? For the googoleth time, I thank G-d that she didn't give guns to liberals.

At the reading I follow a cellist, and Matt. Matt is scheduled to talk about his life in Peru. Because of a technical glitch in his slideshow, he plays five minutes of a telephone answering machine test message run through a sound processing loop.

The audience? A couple of earnest-looking college girls sitting in the back with their arms folded. An attractive, though preppie-looking, guy in a light suit with a dark shirt. He later tells me his name, something like Reginald Trumpet the Third.

Then there's his even more attractive girlfriend, who sits off to the side with both her arms and legs folded, pressed tightly together, especially while I'm speaking. Then, there's Brian. Jim Bell is not there. Neither is anyone else.

I'm the only performer who says a word. I say a lot of 'em. Talking about piss-drinking in Mongolia, and sleeping in my own vomit.

After I finish, Matt and Brian applaud loudly. The preppie guy and his girlfriend applaud politely. The girls in the back have left. I sell two books—to Matt.

The next show is in downtown San Diego. It's a nice little space on top of Gelato Vera Cafe. Kind of like an enclosed balcony, there are seats for about 20 people. I set up a little display. My $100 suitcase has books, CDs, cassettes, anything I've done. Bob has given me the rest of the artless *Beer Is Better Than Girls Are* 7"s. I'm selling them for $5.

This place has a few more people. At least a dozen are here for the start of Matt's performance. This time the computer slides worked. Matt is ready to talk.

I expect he'll talk about his work with a film crew in Peru. Politics. I don't know. A travel log. That's a perfect set-up for me to start the gross-out. Hah! Is this crowd gonna be shocked when they hear the Mongolian piss stuff!

Matt is speaking.

So, I lie down on the table. The shaman takes the live guinea pig and rubs it all over my body. It's not a gentle rub. She squeezes it against my head, my neck. Down under my shirt. She unzips my pants and presses that squashed bit of live fur between my legs. Up and down. Then down my legs, scraping it against my feet. My toenails scratch rivulets of blood in its little hide.

Then she holds up the half dead animal and tears it open. Just rips right into the stomach, pulling out heart, lungs, intestines. She runs the organs through her fingers, poking here or there.

"See," she tells me, "look at this. This means your heart is strong. Look at these lungs. See that blood on the left one. You need to watch. Don't smoke too much."

Piece by bloody piece she takes apart the animal. It's impossible to tell when it was alive and when it died. It's a mess.

Then it's my turn to speak. Yeah right.

Despite being upstaged by a guinea pig, and thanks to a newfound ability to take credit cards, I sell about a half dozen books and a few CDs.

After the show, we go out eating and drinking at a local pub. I need San Diego for fish and chips? Aw, that's a minor complaint. It was a fun crew with a fuck of a lot of Guinness.

"Hey Mykel," suggests Brian. "Fuck that Greyhound stuff. I'll give you a ride to LA tomorrow."

"Great!" I tell him. "Maybe I can get a refund on that part of the ticket. Let's check at the station first."

Early the next day, I'm at the Greyhound station.

"Solly, Mr. Board," says the clerk. She's a short Oriental, with a severe Chinese accent. "Yaw ticket dis morning. You cannot use aftah."

"But I was told I had a year to use it," I explain. "365 days."

"That's a legula ticket," she says. "You have seven day advance ticket."

"I bought that ticket because I was told I could use it for a year," I whine.

"Who tol you zat?" she asks.

"Some hillbilly on the phone," I say, increasingly angry.

"I don't know hirbirry," she says. "You change yaw ticket. You must pay ten dallas."

"Can I pay in LA?" I ask her.

"You pay here. Use yaw ticket in Ros Angeres. No plobrem."

Ok, ten more dollars. Then to LA for my show. That's Sunday. Monday I'll use a free day coupon to rent a car. I can return the car to the same place. In the meantime, I'll visit the folks at Monster and convince them to sponsor me.

Tuesday night I'll take the bus to San Francisco. It's an 11-hour ride, so I'll be there Wednesday, in time to help Cousin Shirley prepare the turkey.

Having learned the right thing from my first misadventure, I call Greyhound to check about baggage weight. They too have a fifty pound limit, but it's per bag. You can take two bags. I spend $30 on another bag and repack.

Brian drives me to LA. We stop for Mexican on the way. Because it's *the right thing*, I buy him a tank of gas. What the hell. If I sell three books in LA, it'll pay for that.

Brian lets me off at Leslie's door, then leaves. From Leslie's house I call Keith, the promoter for the LA reading. It's gonna be at a prophetically named bar, *The Little Joy Cafe*.

"It's tough to find," says Keith. "It's in the Chinese section of a Mexican neighborhood. There's a big yellow Chinese sign outside and it looks like a Chinese restaurant. We want to keep it underground."

Leslie finds the address, but it's tough to find the bar. The entrance is in a little alcove that looks like part of a Chinese supermarket.

Inside, we see a tiny run-down place with a pool table and a set of barstools with un-matched tears in the vinyl.

We walk in. A couple thirty-somethings play pool. Behind the bar a long-haired, pot-bellied bartender who, in another life, was a computer nerd, Trekkie, or zine editor, slowly sips something white and bubbly from a chipped glass. Standing in the middle of the concrete floor, as if waiting, is a tall grey-haired man wearing a dirty cloth jacket. His arm is in a sling.

I enter, lugging a bag with half a dozen books in it. In my other hand is a Monster. I drop the bag in the corner.

"You look like you're a reader," says the grey-haired guy. "My name is Jake."

"Hi Jake," I say, reaching out my right hand. "My name's Mykel and you're right."

Jake wiggles the fingers on the hand in the sling. I take that as a sign he wants me to shake that hand. I do. Then he leaves.

I sit at the bar with Leslie. Pool balls clank in counterpoint to Iggy Pop on the jukebox.

Now I wanna be your dog. KLAK! *Now I wanna be your dog.* KLAK! KLAK! *Now I wanna be your dog.* Rrrssshhh. Thud. Thud. KLAK! *Well all right!* Thud. Thud. SHIT!

In walks a late-twenty-something, slightly hung-over looking. He sits down at the bar next to me.

"You Mykel?" he says, peering deeply into the bottles behind the bar.

"Yep," I say. "Doesn't look like much of a turnout. Did you put up the posters I sent you?"

Keith shakes his head.

"I want to keep this underground," he says. "If we do publicity... If I tell anyone... you know... it loses its purity. Before you know it, we'll have just anybody here. Reading from notebooks or something. If we don't tell anybody, then it can be really underground. If people know about it, it's... you know... like everything else."

"But no one's here," I complain.

"Yeah," he says, "isn't that cool?"

"I need to sell some books." I tell him. "Besides, I don't think empty barstools were the audience I was looking for."

"I'll listen to you read," he says. "I'll buy a book."

I get up to read. Leslie and Keith applaud. I shuffle over to the table with the books on it and pick one up. I open it to the bookmarked page.

"You don't mind if we have another game," comes a voice from the pool table.

I shrug.

"Now, I want to write about kids and piss," I read.

KLANK.

"In Mongolia, piss is a home remedy, like Tylenol in America."

KLANK, KLANK, Shhhrrrr-bunk. *Yes!*

And on it goes for the next fifteen minutes. When I finish, the bartender and Leslie applaud. Keith is nowhere to be seen. Leslie drives me back to his place.

The next morning, I go to Hertz to pick up the car to drive to the Monster factory. I'm early, but the car dealer says that's alright. Now they know I'll be there and they can order the car with the satellite system I need to help me find anything in California. My reservation is for 1:00. It's now 11. In the meantime, I'll go to Greyhound to pick up my ticket, then return for the car.

Another person of Asian decent is at the Greyhound counter.

"I'd like to change this ticket for one leaving on Tuesday night," I tell him. "I already paid the $10 change fee."

"You no can leave Wednesday," he says. "This special fare ticket. Seven day. Wednesday holiday. You ticket no good holiday. Look. Look."

He shows me a little sign that says SPECIAL FARE TICKETS NOT GOOD FOR HOLIDAY TRAVEL.

"I never saw that sign," I tell him.

"It come today," he says. "Juss today."

I slowly inhale. Count to ten. Exhale. I can feel the blood pulsing at my temples, ready to burst forth in a bleeding hemorrhage that will bring a red tide to the entire terminal. I count again.

"Okay," I say, "when can I leave?"

"You can leave day afta Thank Give," he says. "No lestliction."

"But I have to be in San Francisco for Thanksgiving. That's why I'm in California."

"You reave today. Okay? Erevan tah-dee tonight. Okay? You be in San Francisco tomollow."

There goes my Monster sponsorship. There goes... fuck it. I'm outta there. Back to Leslie's, back to the Greyhound. Off to SF where my brave cousin picks me up at 7 a.m.

I'm just about out of column space, so I'll speed up. San Francisco is the best of the trip. Jim set up a good show at the Dark Room. John Trubee and Jennifer Blowdryer also read.

Before I fly back to New York, I call Delta Airlines on a hunch.

"This is Mykel Board calling," I tell the reservations clerk, somewhere in Delhi. "I'm calling to find out about your weight limits. I know there's a 50 pound limit. Could you tell me if that's the total? Or is it per bag?"

"You are allowed two bags," she says. "Fifty pounds each."

"Why wasn't I told this when I checked in?" I ask. "I had to pay $100 when I could have just bought another bag."

"I'm sorry, Mr. Board," says the operator. "Did you ask?"

"How could I ask?" I answer, feeling my blood pressure rising again. "There's no way to ask if you don't know the question. You can't ask *everything*. Should I ask if there's a penalty for wearing blue pants instead of black?"

"And what color pants will you be wearing, Mr. Board?" she says.

I hang up.

So for this trip, the right thing was to make a bundle, promote my book and find a sponsor. Yeah, right.

And my former friend who I sent the book to? I hear he threw it away immediately. He was pissed that I didn't sign it... make it special for him. Yeah, right.

Listen buckaroos, forget about this *right thing* stuff. It'll only get you in trouble and cost you a shitload of money. Be *wrong*. It's easier... and more fun.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive hot links to some of the topics here. Visitors to my blog (you can get it through the website) can comment on the column... or anything else.*]

Feeling Lousy? Pick on a Wimp! Dept: According to the Archives of Disease in Childhood: Children who bully are mentally and physically healthier than those they persecute.

Scientists studied more than 1,600 primary school children, aged between six and nine. They found children described as "pure bullies"—those who bullied, but were not themselves victimized—were the least likely to suffer either physical or psychosomatic illness. On the other hand, bullied kids had more physical and psychological problems than other children.

Just further proof that it pays to do the *wrong* thing.

And PETA Says We Don't Need Animal Research dept: According to *This Week* Magazine, Harvard University Medical School researchers removed from rabbits the spongy penis tissue that swells during an erection. Then they used cells from this tissue to grow replacements. Because the new penis cells originated from the rabbit's' own cells, their immune systems did not reject the replacement. Once the rabbits recovered from surgery they could "copulate, penetrate, and produce sperm." Their erections, however, were only half as firm as usual.

"It's analogous to the penis of a 60-year-old man versus that of a 30-year-old," explained one scientist.

His team is now trying to grow a complete penis.

Up Against the Wall Bubbela dept: Artists in New York, Tel Aviv, and Ramallah have coordinated their efforts against the Israeli-constructed wall between Israel and Palestine. It's amazing how people who were victims of ghetto walls now build walls to ghettoize others.

Nah, it's not amazing for two reasons. 1. The worst violence is always committed by people who have had violence used against them. 2. They probably read about how bullies are so healthy.

Stop Welfare Abuse dept: Airbus, the European airline maker, is suing Boeing because of its huge subsidies—typical for government Corporate Welfare.

Airbus bases its case on the technologies used in the Boeing 777 and 787. Those were developed by the US government and then released without charge to Boeing. In addition, the Japanese government has provided "launch aid" (government subsidies) for Boeing's Japanese subcontractors.

Oh yeah, Boeing is also suing Airbus. They say that European countries have given low-cost loans to the plane maker. I say Airbus should complain. They're only getting a loan. Boeing gets the whole kit and caboodle—interest free!

Let's Teach Them Folks the Real Meaning of America dept: A Spanish language reality show called *Gana la Verde* (Earn the Green) provides the clearest view yet of melding American values. The TV show features worm-eating, jumping from a moving train, and other *Fear Factor*-type contests. But there's a difference.

The "Green" referred to in the title is not cash, but *a green card*. That is, legal permission to work in the US. Since the show is not actually run by the US government (it should be!), the producers cannot guarantee a Green Card. Instead, they provide lawyers, who do their best to help winners find nice LEGAL $5.50 an hour jobs making tacos in Laredo.

I Only Followed (Written) Orders Redux dept: Both Bob and Dick had comments about my last column where I wrote about falling into the trap of obeying an order just because it's written.

Dick said it was lucky I didn't pass a sign that said "Void Where Prohibited," or someone would have arrested me for public urination.

Bob said it's lucky people don't write the oft heard (by me) command, "Go fuck yourself," or I'd still be stuck somewhere trying.

If *you'd* like to comment on a column, try it at the blog version, or email me at: god@mykelboard.com

Good Riddance dept: Under the headline "George W. Bush Is Just Too Liberal," the *Utne Reader* reports that a right-wing Christian group is urging its followers to move to South Carolina. When there's enough of them, they can force the state leaders to secede from the Union. Check out christianexodus.org. I hope the plan works. We'll be better off without those guys.

As for George W., with his low poll ratings and universal scorn, it's about time to come to the defense of poor bastard. He may be a Christian, he may be a moron, but I'd sure like to be his friend. He sticks by his friends. If Karl Rove, Scooter Libby or Dick Cheney were Bill Clinton's friends, they'd be at the bottom of a river by now.

No.

...the last institution standing in the way of a perfect autocracy will be the plaintiff's bar. If corporations can be shielded from the consequences of their negligence, then people will have no redress for public or private wrongs.

—J. Russell Tyndesley, *The Real Goal of Tort Reform*, Baltimore Sun, December 17, 2004

A couple of good punk rocker-type friends of mine, both of whom have a highly intelligent, well-rounded grasp on current political issues with which I generally agree, were (according to another good friend) having a debate/rant session a little while back about an issue which relatively few people think about on a deep level: tort reform. Now, before you tune out and skip to Bill Florio's column or something (which is something I'd probably be inclined to do myself), just think about this issue for a moment—what do you know about it? What does it mean, and what will it mean if things "change" in the manner those who run the tort reform movement want them to? Tort reform, stated simply, aims to restrict the ability of individuals and groups to bring lawsuits to court against insurance corporations and the like, and to set much lower caps on how much money can be awarded in damages—the current (seemingly excessive) amounts people are often granted are, in the view of "unreformed" tort law, supposedly the only deterrent that economically powerful companies will recognize to keep them from engaging in the same abusive behavior repeatedly.

Like my ranting friends, and myself until relatively recently, if you know about tort reform at all you are probably thinking about "ridiculous" lawsuits you've seen on the news, such as the fat guy suing the fast food industry for addicting him to fatty foods, or doctors who are supposedly scared to practice medicine for fear of malpractice lawsuits, or billboards reading "350,000 lawsuits last year alone—help!" or the woman who sued McDonald's after spilling scalding hot coffee all over herself (more on that in a minute). The key turn of phrase here, though, is "all over herself"—our society, including the news media, considers the idea of "personal responsibility" to be very important, and we are quick to characterize those who make a vocal complaint as "whiners," even when things are not as simple as they seem and what they may be "whining" about is a serious abuse of power by a large corporation. In fact, the whole reason why we consider people who use the legal system to gain some redress for a perceived injustice to be "whiners" is complex in itself, and is a product of specific conditions.

The simple text header on the front page of the popular website www.stellaawards.com reads, "Opportunists and Self-Described Victims (Plaintiffs) vs. Any Available Deep Pockets and the U.S. Justice System (Defendants)." The website, operated by Denver newspaper columnist Randy Cassingham, states that it is named it after Stella Liebeck, the civil plaintiff in the infamous 1992 McDonald's coffee case, in which the elderly Ms. Liebeck was severely burned after spilling on her lap the boiling McDonald's coffee which she had just purchased from a McDonald's drive-through window. Cassingham writes, "A New Mexico jury awarded her $2.9 million [two days' worth of McDonald's coffee sales] in damages, but that's not the whole story. Ever since, the name 'Stella Award' has been applied to any wild, outrageous, or ridiculous lawsuits... Are the people using the courts to redress justifiable grievances that can't otherwise be settled? Or are they trying to extort money from anyone they can?" Cassingham continues with page after page of "ridiculous" lawsuits, and his allegations of nonstop abuse of the court system are anchored by a concerted effort to establish his professionalism as something of a public servant, even as he rails against one of the primary institutions by which members of the public can use law to seek redress from entities which often work beyond it, and have the possibility to make changes for the better.

A link on the Stella Awards homepage leads to a brief discussion of purportedly bogus cases, many of which have risen to urban legend-type status via repeated dissemination and street-level word of mouth, and are alleged to have been mass-emailed by unknown persons as though they were officially sanctioned by the website itself. There is also a further discussion of Ms. Liebeck's case itself, which provides a more nuanced account of the facts—her compensation was reduced to $640,000, she was found 20 percent liable for her own injuries, and she required two years of rehabilitative treatment. In addition, Cassingham reveals that from 1982 to 1992 McDonald's coffee burned more than 700 people (often seriously). The site admits that "Much of the coverage about Stella Liebeck has been grossly unfair." Cassingham, however, immediately asserts that the injury rate (compared to number of cups sold) was negligible, the actual amount of the final settlement was secret (inferred to be higher) as it went into private negotiation, and that the "obviously sympathetic" jury's decision to find Ms. Liebeck 20 percent at fault infers that she should have taken responsibility for her own actions. Cassingham then declares her an "American icon," a "symbol of the American Tort system gone wrong."

Cassingham's website, which he states as being completely independent ("unlike most 'tort reform' sites") and mentions that he is a "professional member of the Society of Professional Journalists," is a fine example of how the widespread the perception of an out-of-control legal system with rogue juries, sleazy lawyers, and greedy plaintiffs, seeking ungodly sums of money in frivolous lawsuits from a victimized corporate America, has become ingrained in the eyes of the public. Cassingham presents himself as an ordinary guy, righteously angry and indignant at this "abuse [of] the system in the name of getting a piece of the action." The interesting thing is that most independent websites, run by normal people, do not achieve the level of mass media attention that Cassingham has. His "media" section includes a screen shot of him being interviewed on Fox television news, and media as wide-ranging as the *Los Angeles Times, s,* and CNN have featured Cassingham and used www.stellaawards.com as a source for stories. The mass media's repeated use of Cassingham's populist vision of the tort reform movement demonstrates just how effective the media themselves have been in naturalizing a particular viewpoint on the issue in the minds of much of the public—a viewpoint that is, at base, calling for broad limitations on the subaltern plaintiff's access to law (subaltern meaning they are coming from a less powerful position, socially and economically, than the other side of the dispute).

Though statistics have repeatedly shown that Americans are not, contrary to widespread opinion, particularly litigious (the only place where torts are actually increasing is in corporate-to-corporate suits, not a focus of tort reformers), media coverage of tort law does not reflect this. In Daniel S. Bailis and Robert J. MacCoun's 1996 report *Estimating Liability Risks with the Media as Your Guide: A Content Analysis of Media Coverage of Tort Litigation*, they note that media coverage of tort issues is predominantly news-oriented rather than editorial, and when they express evaluative comment it is almost exclusively critical of the tort system.

Laura Nader (yes, she is Ralph Nader's sister), in her book *Life of the Law*, outlines how the law of torts, encompassed by the modern law of "civil wrongs," is in place for the civil plaintiff. Driven by the justice motive, the plaintiff seeks "not simply compensation but also deterrence (or prevention) and punishment for conscious wrongdoing." Twentieth-century tort law grew with the insistence that the liable party must take responsibility for its actions. After the turn of the century the insurance industry grew rapidly, which made it more likely than ever for the subaltern plaintiff to receive compensation for an injury when filing suit against the abstract face of a corporation. With the growing success for plaintiff users of law, however, soon came top-down opposition emanating from within the insurance industry. The advertising-dependent, newly emerging mass media market in the United States became a sounding board for the industry's concerns.

The modern American tort reform movement (sometimes called the "Tort Deform" movement by people such as longtime consumer advocate and presidential election shit-stirrer Ralph Nader) in the United States has been bandied about for decades, beginning with concerted campaigns led by the insurance industry in the early 1950s in the bloody wake of the postwar auto boom on US highways. As Stephanie Mencimer outlines in her article *False Alarm*, the insurance industry ran large-scale ad campaigns in such magazines as Life and The Saturday Evening Post aimed at potential jurors, urging them to avoid "excessive" or "unfounded" awards, and imploring them to remember that "you pay for liability and damage suit verdicts whether you are insured or not." The industry's public relations arm, The Insurance Information Institute, helped to craft and plant (ostensible) investigative journalism articles and press releases in national magazines, and even created television programming such as 1962's *Smash-Up* (televised on CBS), "a fictionalized docudrama that portrayed sleazy lawyers faking auto accident cases."

The 1970s saw a change in the rhetoric of insurance industry advertising, which increasingly targeted the civil plaintiff as a source of juridical abuse along with the classic targets of "sleazy lawyers" and "errant" juries. This era saw the beginning of, as Mencimer puts it, "what would become a staple of anti-lawsuit rhetoric: the fictional lawsuit horror story." The insurance company Crum & Forester sent out press releases telling the story of a man who injured himself using a lawnmower as a hedge clipper, and was awarded $500,000 in a jury verdict. As with many such heavily publicized, sensational cases to come, this story was entirely untrue—"but," Mencimer writes, "that didn't keep it from circulating widely in the media and in conservative political speeches." This sensationalistic approach made for easy targets and oversimplified realities in a media environment, which was quickly recognizing the necessity to appeal to short consumer attention spans.

In Bailis and MacCoun's report, they write that "...the media rely on consumer interest to sell their products, and a statistically representative selection of stories is unlikely to attract an audience. In terms of newsworthiness and audience interest, it is likely that jury trials outrank settlements, unusually large jury awards outrank very modest awards, and accidents involving malfunctioning professionals or products outrank run-of-the-mill fender benders and slips and falls." In addition to its function in pleasing large advertisers, this journalistic focus served to help shape public opinion on civil litigation. As Bailis and MacCoun put it, "[S]ome scholars have speculated that, either wittingly or unwittingly, the media have played a crucial role in sustaining and encouraging the [tort reform] debate by exaggerating the extent to which litigation rates and the size of jury awards are 'out of control.'"

Meanwhile, the insurance industry's advertising campaigns aimed at jurors continued apace. In order to truly convince the public that the interests of large corporations were, in fact, simultaneous with their own interests, hugely expensive ads such as those for St. Paul Property and Liability Insurance Company were taken out on television and print media. "Do you really think it's the insurance company that's paying for all those large jury awards?" the ads asked. "When awards are out of line, everyone pays more. In the form of higher insurance rates." In 1979, researcher Elizabeth Loftus did a study on how these ads affected potential jurors in civil cases. Loftus demonstrated (in a mock jury setting) that, relative to jurors who were not exposed to an anti-tort ad, "even a single exposure to one of the insurance industry's ads dramatically lowered the award jurors in a personal injury case were willing to give."

Around the same time, another conservative movement was afoot via the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) movement, which effectively advocated the removal of most lawsuits from the public courtroom and into a private setting of arbitration, thus preventing the establishment of juridicial precedent. ADR Arbitrators are hired by the company who would be the defendant, such as an insurance company. The ADR firm wants more business, so who do you think they are gonna side with? The ADR movement came about partially as a result of the success of 1960s movements such as the Civil Rights and the Consumer Movements of the 1960s—both of which utilized the courts to great advantage, primarily via the application of large scale class-action suits which tort reform and ADR advocates began working to severely limit.

Doing this, however, would require a shift in public perception and opinion of civil courts, which had come to be seen as increasingly effective in the execution of social justice policy. Much of the mass media (particularly television) was totally beholden to advertisers to a large extent. What happened was a shift in rhetoric to include debasement of the subaltern plaintiff in a sensational (if often untruthful) manner, and during the mid-1980s, this shift in focus by the industry led to concerted legislative lobbying efforts to place restrictions on citizens' ability to sue at all.

The dawning of the 1980s under president Ronald Reagan, heavily influenced by the economist Milton Friedman, also saw the beginnings of a large-scale rollback of governmental regulations on business. This laid the groundwork for the consolidation of media under a small number of Transnational Corporations (TNCs), under which the tone of mass media coverage of tort reform intensified. The TNCs and Reaganites made explicit lobbying alliances with the insurance industry to pursue tort reform legislation and limit access to law for subaltern plaintiffs, as deregulation meant that big business was much more free to engage in activities that could be harmful to the public. Advertising in mass media played a prominent role, and Newsweek, in 1986, ran a series of insurance industry ads warning of the dangers of lawsuits to clergy, small OB/GYN clinics, and local sports programs under the heading "We All Pay the Price." During this same year, 1,600 tort reform measures were introduced across the country, with 21 being enacted and passing strong restrictions on lawsuits and jury awards.

Right-wing think tanks were commissioned by corporate leaders to draft fresh strategies for the publicizing and implementation of their ideas. In *False Alarm*, Mencimer describes the role of the Manhattan Institute, founded by deceased CIA head William Casey:

"In 1986, the institute created its Project on Civil Justice Reform with funding from all the same insurance companies who'd been responsible for circulating bogus lawsuit horror stories. The project was targeted specifically at journalists. In a 1992 memo, institute president William Hammett explained the strategy for molding reporters into a "pro-tort reform" position: "Journalists need copy, and it's an established fact that over time they'll 'bend' in the direction in which it flows. For that reason, it is imperative that a steady stream of understandable research, analysis, and commentary supporting the need for liability reform be produced. If sometime during the present decade, a consensus emerges in favor of serious judicial reform, it will be because millions of minds have been changed, and only one institution is powerful enough to bring that about: the combined force of the nation's print and broadcast media, the most potent instrument for public education—or miseducation—in existence."

This project produced a decade's worth of propaganda (reports, editorials, mailings, books, reports, conferences, etc.) against the so-called "litigation explosion," trial lawyers, and unsympathetic civil plaintiffs. 20/20's John Stossel, the New Republic's editor Michael Kinsley and columnist Fred Barnes, and Stuart Taylor (Newsweek, The National Journal, The Atlantic Monthly) were just a few of those who dutifully reported "research" that indicated lawsuits were driving up the cost of day-to-day living for consumers to unforseen heights. But this widely-publicized "tort tax" (as coined by the Manhattan Institute's Peter Huber), which reputedly cost Americans $300 billion a year and was cited by Vice President Dan Quayle on the campaign trail, turned out (upon independent research in 1992) to be completely made-up—by Huber.

The bottom line is that TNCs (including large insurers), who were rapidly being enabled by Reagan to do whatever they wanted to do with little fear of public accountability, saw the role of an angry subaltern plaintiff in a civil (public) courtroom as one of the last places they could be challenged in public—so they propelled the ADR, deregulation, and tort reform movements to new levels and changed public opinion by using the mass media. These are movements of the powerful, for the powerful.

At the end of World War II, 80 percent of American newspapers were independently owned. When Ben Haig Bagdikian published "Media Monopoly" (Beacon Press) in 1982, 50 corporations owned almost all of the major media outlets in the United States. That included 1,787 daily newspapers, 11,000 magazines, 9,000 radio stations, 1,000 television stations, 2,500 book publishers and seven major movie studios. By the time Bagdikian put out the revised edition in 1987, the number was down to 29 corporations. And now there are nine. They own it all.

—Molly Ivins, *Three New Books Offer Suggestions for Fixing the Media Mess*, Charleston Gazette, November 2, 1999

The neoliberal (as they would come to be called), free-market, antilaw movements discussed above continued to build and develop in the 1990s, notably under Bill Clinton, whose signing of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 removed most of the remaining limits on media ownership. Later, in the same month that Molly Ivins wrote the above words, the number of corporations who controlled the vast majority of mass media shrank to eight. Robert W. McChesny, in his article *The New Global Media*, lists the "Big 8": "TNCs that rule U.S. media: General

Electric, AT&T/Liberty Media, Disney, Time Warner, Sony, News Corporation, Viacom and Seagram, plus Bertelsmann, the Germany-based conglomerate… Only two of the nine are not major content producers: AT&T and GE. But GE owns NBC, AT&T has major media content holdings through Liberty Media, and both firms are in a position to acquire assets as they become necessary." McChesney notes that meaningful economic competition amongst these giants is minimal, and that many have interchangeable personnel on their boards of directors, own pieces of each other, or share the same major shareholders. "This way, firms reduce competition and risk and increase the chance of profitability… In some respects, the global media market more closely resembles a cartel than it does the competitive marketplace found in economics textbooks."

Can journalistic objectivity be maintained when one's parent company is a corporate giant such as GE, whose diverse holdings include GE Capital—a major international insurance and finance company? The increasingly overt conflicts of interest that journalists working for mass media have to contend with have created a growing climate of self-censorship. Michael Kent Curtis, in his study *Democratic Ideals and Media Realities*, cites a 2000 poll in which "some 26 percent of journalists admitted to engaging in self-censorship of news stories because of conflicts of interest involving their news organization, its parent company, advertisers, or friends of the boss. Forty-one percent admitted to reshaping or softening stories."

Along with the self-censorship of journalists and implicit conflicts of interest with corporate parent companies and allies, the power of large advertisers continues to maintain a decided hold over what content is aired and what is not, and can profoundly influence public opinion and policy as a result. Curtis details how the tobacco industry spent $35 million dollars in 1998 in fighting, via an ad campaign, the amended Universal Tobacco Settlement Act in congress, which did not shield tobacco companies from tort suits. The advertisements alleged that the bill would create 60 new bureaucracies and increase working peoples' taxes. The ads did not, however, explain the purpose of the taxes and to what use the money from them would be put (they were to go to fund cancer research and campaigns to keep teens from smoking cigarettes), and the allegation of "60 new bureaucracies" was simply the speculation of a tobacco company executive and had no basis in fact. An American Cancer Society ad supporting the bill only ran for one week, and though the tobacco industry's campaign lasted well over a month, the *New York Times* and ABC News only ran a single piece each on the inaccuracy of the tobacco industry ads. CNN (which aired the ads the most) ran no story evaluating the accuracy of the ads at all. The strong early support for this version of the bill weakened, and it was defeated.

We don't need to look at this as some "vast right-wing media conspiracy." It is more important to look at the way those who have a shitload of money manipulate public policy to keep ahold of it, and how this helps other people with a shitload of money as well. As Curtis puts it, "The problem is not that tobacco, insurance, utility, and drug companies can and do buy a lavish hearing for their preferred views. It is that the other side is often virtually absent from the televised 'debate.' The mass media is in the business of selling viewers to advertisers. An arrangement in which one side can afford to buy massive amounts of media time and viewer attention while the other cannot is, of course, *not ideologically neutral* [italics mine]. The United States has a regulatory system that favors the opulent over the poorly funded side of the debate."

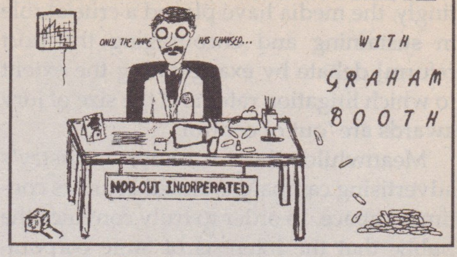
If you look at a case in the news where it seems like someone is filing a suit based on a "silly" case and you think "man, he's ruining it for the rest of us," it's important to recognize that you are being manipulated by entities with interests most likely very different from yours. These are impressions that seem "natural" to us, but are actually products of a very specific type of thought—one that can afford to buy far more airtime and print space than others, because these are the thoughts of the people who run the modern world through brute force and cold cash.

There's nothing natural or inevitable about corporate control of media, In fact, it's a cornerstone of our democracy that the American people own the airwaves; they're loaned to corporations on the condition that they be used to serve the public interest. Media corporations have clearly violated that trust, and people have had enough.

—Janine Jackson,
Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting.

—Johnny No Mink, PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609. johngeek@hotmail.com, web archive at www.myspace.com/noarchive

ROCKET TO NOWHERE



Attention Readers:

Uhhh, apparently someone at MRR HQ was led to believe that I am some kinda authority on collecting punk records. While I'm not sure where they got their information, I'm hardly the type to argue with anyone at MRR. So I've decided to humor them by agreeing to write a "record collector" column. If nothing else, surely I can't be as bad as that last guy (what was his name again?). It's not like anyone still reads this magazine anyways.

As an obsessive record collector, things have changed a lot since I started reading MRR back in the early 90s. Back then, the *MRR* classifieds were ground zero for hooking with other collector scum from around the globe. I was oblivious to the Internet until I started college in 1994, so the only place to get good records back then was either get lucky at a local used record store (yawn), or start a letter writing campaign to ridiculous names like Mike Bastarache, Ingo Eitelbach, Jamie Sabuda, Paul Holstein, Peter P., Abe King, Stoopid Records, Rob Noxious, and countless others...

I remember getting these lists...just like the classified ads, only with 200 titles instead of 10. Some were actually typed, but it was the hand-written lists that really hit me. There would always be a couple blacked out with a sharpie, and if you were lucky, it wasn't a Xerox of a sharpie, so you could barely make out what had been crossed out. I spent hours upon hours perusing these lists, memorizing all of the names, deciding what I could afford, and wondering what all of these other mystery bands were, especially the ones with $40 or $50 price-tags. It was amazing what you could buy for $10 back then, and as a wise man once said, "you could have any record for $100." These were "punk" records after all.

By the time I got on the information superhighway, REC.MUSIC.MARKETPLACE.VINYL was already in full swing, and many of the names I recognized from *MRR* were now buying/selling/trading online. New "set sale" priced lists would pop up every few days from some newfangled seller in Singapore or Australia, and if you happened to be lurking at the right time, you could find some great deals. Hell, I even unloaded some of my own dreck that way. The results were usually instantaneous—you didn't have to sweat waiting for your letter to get to Malden, MA anymore.

But the technology didn't come without its downside. The competition was aggressive and seemed to be growing. A matter of seconds determined whether you got the record you wanted that day. Sellers, bombarded with emails about certain records, started to favor the informal auction format, and prices began to soar on seemingly easy to get records.

MRR continued to be thee place to find the rarest records, and by 1996, certain records were regularly being advertised at minimum bids of 2000 DM, (roughly $1000—do you know what a DM is?). I was a broke college student, and many of the records I needed to own were fetching $200-300. It was then that my hours of scanning want/sales lists started to pay off. Who knew that some of these records were actually lurking out there in dollar bins?

I realized the true potential of trading in one of my earliest swaps. I managed to dig up a CRACKED ACTOR single locally, having remembered seeing it selling on a list for a lot of money. As I stood staring at the record, I couldn't believe it: not only is this a desirable record, but a 99 cent one at that! I took it home, and after struggling puzzled by the lyrics for a few days, emailed a few of my European contacts. I ended up trading it with a couple of small records for my top want at the time, the BIG BOYS *Frat Cars* EP—one record I never imagined I would own! Sure, I've had some lucky days at the shops, but honestly, most of my favorite records were acquired through trading—that is, until recently.

Enter eBay. I must've been one of the first people to actually look at this "online collectibles auction" site in search of records. I'd check it out every week or two, search for "punk," and usually come up blank. It took a few months for my first hit, but it turned out to be pretty good...THE EAT – *God Punishes The Eat* EP. That was quite a painful week. I waited and waited and waited, and finally bid in the last minutes hoping for a winner. I actually won it for $41! How someone else found it will always remain a mystery. Musically, it turned out to be a bit of a let down, and I learned a lesson (rather inexpensively in this case): expensive records aren't always good records.

As time wore on, more and more punk records started turning up on eBay, and record prices were all out of whack. Certain records, which used to sell for lots of money in stores or on set sale lists, now weren't even fetching half the price. Who knew...most punk records aren't actually that rare.

But the real surprise came on the truly rare records. It took a while for eBay to catch up with the private auction lists, but when it did, prices were higher than ever. Who ever would've guessed that a MINOR THREAT – *Filler* EP would fetch $700? Will it ever happen again? As far as I know, THE MISFITS hold the current high price record with their black vinyl *Horror Business* single, which topped $8000. Even more insane, the seller knew nothing about the MISFITS, and was simply selling off his dead brother's estate. Without eBay, that record could quite likely be rotting in a landfill right now.

Unfortunately, with all the interest directed at eBay, the *MRR* classifieds went from 6-8 pages down to a single page devoid of record ads, and the private set sale/auction list phenomenon has almost disappeared completely. The auction format has made trading next to impossible...everybody is too worried about getting their money's worth, and prices which used to range from $1-100 now normally fluctuate between $1-1000. Is $900 the going rate for a KORO EP if it sold for that price one time? Everybody seems to agree: Let eBay decide!

It's kind of sad that, at this point in time, any conversation about collecting anything will undoubtedly address eBay at some point. While I can't say it won't come up again here, I'm neither interested in doing a "Market Watch" column, nor arguing about how eBay sold out collecting or whatever. It sucks that records cost so much now, but at the same time, I've had opportunities to buy records that I might not have a shot at otherwise. And eBay has a knack for pulling amazing things out of the woodwork. Sometimes I'd love to go back to 1994 and do this all through *MRR* ads and the post office, but then again, I wouldn't have half of the records I do right now.

Admittedly, I feel lucky that I started collecting when I did. It can't be easy trying to start a new collection from scratch these days. It's hard for me to believe that there are many teenage punk rockers out there who can manage to scrounge up $200 for a record, because I can remember how hard it was to scrounge up even $20. Heck, I'm almost 30, and I can't even compete with the doctors, dentists, and engineers buying punk records nowadays. That said, I've managed to do pretty well on an often-meager income. It's all just a matter of time, so stick with it!

It's the end of a fucked up year... there's another one coming—OH SHIT!!!
—Embrace

No, I haven't gone emo on you, but I still like that Embrace album and if you have a problem with it, too fucking bad. Even though this is the February issue and I'm typing this column in early December, it'll come out around the new year. That's my usual end-of-year song and I've been ending my annual "best of" radio show with it since I began doing the show in 2000. It's just as applicable as ever, I'm afraid. A fucked-up year, as usual. This decade has been one fucked-up year after another in this era of Republipuke control as well as in my own life, which I've detailed in this space and other writing outlets.

Actually, let me detail one recent news tidbit from Lynn, MA, the city where I lived for almost 15 years and still visit several times a week to pick up my mail and walk by the beach. Well, when it's not snowing out—the walkways and sidewalks are usually impassable once that happens—typical Lynn... Lynn, Lynn, not only the city of sin, as the old couplet goes, but also the city of mediocre services. Their mayor, Edward "Chip"Clancy, is a conservative Democrat and he just got re-elected after running unopposed. I remember him from his days as a city councilor and state senator and state rep. I'm trying to remember details of why he'd often piss me off, but it's been a while—I just recall he was pretty reactionary on many social issues.

Clancy seems to have a real problem with the city's homeless shelter/soup kitchen, My Brother's Table, which has been serving the city's less fortunate for many years. In fact, I drive by it when I pick up my mail since it's on the same block, a bit down on the opposite side. I often see people waiting to get in, unable to sit down because, some years ago, the city ordered the removal of the benches where they'd sit.

Classy move.

Anyway, how does Clancy plan to deal with homelessness in downtown Lynn? In typically reactionary fashion—chase 'em out. Get rid of the shelter. *The Boston Globe* had an article, in late November, about how the city doesn't plan to renew the lease for the shelter. According to that article, Clancy called the shelter a *"'nuisance' in a resurgent downtown... Clancy said the nonprofits have not done enough to crack down on approximately 30 homeless people routinely found drunk, loitering, and begging for money downtown. "Very frankly, I have been dissatisfied over a period of time with both tenants and their lack of responsiveness to complaints about how the serial inebriate population is affecting the surrounding neighborhood," Clancy said... The two nonprofits now have two years either to negotiate new leases with the city or look for new homes... Clancy's decision comes as Lynn adopts an ambitious Bush administration goal to end chronic homelessness in urban areas by 2012."*

I tend not to trust anything that comes out of the Bush administration, certainly not any economic policies. Their agenda certainly doesn't have the poor's best interests in mind—look at what happened after Hurricane Katrina, for one thing. Do you really think Bush has a feasible plan to end homelessness? In any case, some advocates for the homeless don't feel it's such a great idea. A Quaker publication, *Street Spirit*, out of Oakland, CA, says this plan is a bad idea because *"it steals money from existing poverty programs rather than creating new funding streams, and effectively eliminates the mental health, substance abuse, transitional housing, legal services, child care, and employment training programs that constitute our continuum of care... it is designed to house only those individuals who fit neatly within the federal government's narrow definition of "chronic homelessness" and comprise just 10 percent of the nation's total homeless population, leaving families with children, youth, veterans, seniors, and the working poor out in the cold..."* and *"because it foolishly assumes that officials in Washington, D.C., are better positioned than we, the people, to determine our own local needs and priorities."*

As the article said, downtown Lynn is supposedly in the midst of a revival. I've been hearing about this so-called revival for many years. Maybe it'll actually happen this time. I've noticed some new restaurants opening up—some of them are pretty upscale, way more than I'd probably pay for a meal, to say nothing of some of the residents in that area. According to the same *Globe* article, *"After many years of decline, downtown Lynn is experiencing an urban revival. A $30 million condominium boom has brought new residents and businesses downtown, creating tension with the homeless who frequent city streets, parks, and vacant lots. Police are frequently called to the multiservice center for medical assistance and reports of disturbances and fights."*

Well, yeah, that's an urban center. Where are these people supposed to go? Pack 'em off somewhere? Maybe some kind of solution or compromise can be reached. I do see homeless folks who hang around in Central Square and around the post office. Some of them ask me for change on occasion. I don't know the answer. It's a balancing act between gentrification and improving an area. You can't shunt aside the less fortunate. Call me a bleeding-heart. I don't care and, besides, I'm married to a social worker!

Let's contrast Clancy's threat to shut down the shelter with what's going on in Salem, the next city over. There's an expanded center to serve the city's homeless population not only with food and shelter but also educational programs. They did meet some initial resistance, but after a task force study, overcame that resistance. The Salvation Army mission in Salem is also in the process of expanding its facilities. The fact that these services are increasingly necessary does speak volumes about the continuing problems of poverty—while Gov. Romney, economic nazi that he is, continues to push for tax cuts and cut to social programs. Still, while Lynn threatens to shut down the shelter, Salem finds a place for it. Clancy claims he's not "picking on the poor." It sure seems like it, though.

No easy answers—but I don't think Clancy's solution is the right one.

*****

So 2005 is over. Everyone does their annual wrap-ups, and this column won't be any exception. Music definitely kept me going this year, as it always does. That's been the case my whole life. They would have put me away a long time ago if I didn't have my musical passions to provide an outlet.

Anyway, there were quite a few memorable live shows, decent records, etc. It kind of compensated for all the other shit, such as finding out, a few months ago, that I do have epilepsy and probably have to take medication for it for the rest of my life. I still haven't completely adjusted to those meds, either. The main side effect is I sometimes get the same sensation as being drunk an hour or two after I take it. I suppose there are worse side effects (I'm sure some of you will want to know where you can get this drug) and it does wear off quickly.

Enough of the navel-gazing. Here are my favorite records, CDs, and demos for 2005—just one list, in alphabetical order, although Direct Control's 12" was my favorite record this year. The list could have been longer, but I only have so much column space and, unlike in my younger years, I don't obsess over best-of lists as much anymore... Also, one of the best records I heard all year hasn't even been released as of this writing—VIOLENT MINDS' LP, which is fucking sick. SLEEPER CELL's LP would have made the list, too, if it had been released this year. If it does sneak out before the end of the year, add that one as well.

BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE-Merciless Slaughter 7" EP/second, s/t 7" EP
BLINDS-Busy With Business demo
BLOWN TO BITS/DEATHTOLL-Split LP
BOMB BUILDER-Deadful Melody 12" EP
BREAKS-Get Saved 7" EP
BRODY'S MILITIA-The Appalachian Twelve Gauge Massacre CD
BURY THE LIVING-All The News That's Fit To Scream LP
CARDIAC ARREST-s/t 7" EP
CELEBRITY MURDERS-Time To Kill Space CD
DEAD STOP-Live For Nothing LP
DIRECT CONTROL-You're Controlled 12" EP/Nuclear Tomorrow 7" EP
FUNERAL SHOCK-s/t LP
GIANT HAYSTACKS-Blunt Instrument LP
GOUKA-Program LP
GOVERNMENT WARNING-No Way Out 7" EP
IRRITATORS-demo
LIFE CRISIS-Unpeaceful Protest 7" EP
LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-s/t LP
OUT COLD-Goodbye Cruel World LP
PEDESTRIANS-Future Shock LP/self-titled 7" EP
POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT-s/t 7" EP
REGULATIONS-s/t LP
RITES-Death Of The Party 7" EP
SCURVY DOGS-Relieve Yourself 7" EP
SELFISH-Cause Pain 12" EP
SET TO EXPLODE-s/t CD
SKITKIDS-Valkomna Till Paradiset... 7" EP
SNAKEBITE-Every Bad Idea Is A Good Idea 7" EP
SQUARE THE CIRCLE-s/t 7" EP
STRUNG UP-Warfucked 7" EP

Moving on to the live shows, I did make it to four of the 'fests' this year—including the first LaRivolta Fest in Cambridge, MA, a female-oriented festival with not only music but workshops and featuring some killer sets from BEHIND ENEMY LINES, I OBJECT, and CONDENADA. I also made it out to blustery Chicago for a three day fest that was exhausting and was accompanied by some hassles not related to the fest, including one of the worst restaurant meals I'd had in years but more than made up for by spending time with friends and seeing a dazzling array of great bands including, for the first time, BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE, DIRECT CONTROL, RAT BASTARDS, REPOS, and, finally after 20-plus years of being a fan, THE STATE. The Saturday show was almost overkill, with 20 bands, and I was pretty tapped by the time WORLD BURNS TO DEATH and RIISTETYT played. Other memorable moments—the return of SIN ORDEN, MUNICIPAL WASTE, and their springboards for stage-diving and crowd-surfing rafts and RAMBO'S mock crucifixion.

Albany was the site for the one-day Gloom Fest and, in addition to AVSKUM, the band barrage included FUCKED UP, CAREER SUICIDE, DIRECT CONTROL, and the thrash-metal mania of TOXIC HOLOCAUST, who I also saw play a sick basement show in Boston.

In August, I went to my third Pointless Fest. Hot and sticky all weekend, plus I got caught in a miserable traffic jam on the Jersey Turnpike on the trip down. Maybe not quite on the level of the other Pointless Fests I've attended, but worth the trip to see LIMP WRIST, BORN DEAD ICONS for the first time in a few years, CAUSTIC CHRIST, LOOK BACK AND LAUGH, BSA (again), AFTER THE BOMBS and SKITKIDS. I also saw SKITKIDS completely destroy at a basement show in Boston (the Allston Library—R.I.P.), along with CITIZEN FISH. An odd pairing and completely packed but it worked. Earlier that week, I also saw the SUBHUMANS play a memorable show at the Middle East, one of the few club shows I attended this year.

Also on the return circuit, GANG OF FOUR and THE ADOLESCENTS (not together, dum-dum) showed they still had the fire, even while playing lame corporate rock clubs. HIRAX and MUNICIPAL WASTE brought the metal to the small upstairs room at the Middle East club in Cambridge.

As I've mentioned in this space before, Re:generation Records has become a focal point for the Boston punk scene—a record store, tattoo parlor, and show space about four times a month. The shows have had a great turnout and there have been impressive ones over the past twelve months—not just out-of-town bands, either—the Halloween party, with bands covering AC/DC, AVENGERS, BLACK FLAG, SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN (90s Boston punk band) and COCK SPARRER was a blast. The latter was notable for watching Chris Strunk, usually a drummer for SLEEPER CELL, CONVERSIONS and POISON CONTROL, not only handling the vocals but also getting his hair cut on stage by Sue, who co-owns the store. A show in September with TOXIC NARCOTIC, POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT (one of my favorite local bands) and APESHIT left everyone leaving with a good feeling—to me, that's the mark of a good show: getting you away from the day-to-day shit in your life for a while.

Other hot shows at Re:gen this past year included RIISTETYT, DEAD STOP, along with hot new DC band SET TO EXPLODE, SELFISH with HELLSHOCK, AVSKUM, SEEIN RED, with KRIEGSTANZ and BURY THE LIVING, REGULATIONS (one of the year's best), and Japanese band GOUKA, who drew a smaller crowd and people missed out on this band's Discharge-inspired attack. Felix Havoc always mentions how it's cool that so many foreign bands are touring the states now and playing DIY venues—I'll second that observation.

A few more to mention before moving on to the review section—a fun show at Harvard University at the end of the summer with HUASIPUNGO, SIN ORDEN, I OBJECT, BSA and their Texas compatriots ARMY OF JESUS and POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT. Finally, PEDESTRIANS brought their hard-hitting melodic punk to the Allston Library, along with the pissed-off hardcore of VIOLENT MINDS, thrash-metallers NECROBEAST and straight edge locals BLANK STARE. A diverse combination of bands at that show.

Record Review Time

THE BREAKS – *Get Saved* (Firestarter, 7" EP)

St. Louis—home of the Cardinals, vanquished in the '04 World Series against my beloved Red Sox—and home of this ass-kicking hardcore band. They start with the atheistic anthem, "Breaking The Bible Belt" and don't let up from there. Tightly played, speedy, and angry as fuck. (2981 Falls Rd., Baltimore, MD 21211, www.firestarter-records.com)

CONVERSIONS (demo tape)

Another of the new Boston hardcore bands who have emerged in the past few months—this one fuses fast, energetic thrash with a clean guitar sound, along with some odd time shifts from an almost art-punk influence (subtle hints of the Big Boys and Minutemen). Terry Cuozzo, formerly the bass-player for Refuseniks and Glory Fades, proves to be a commanding vocalist with a nasty snarl in her voice. Sharply-executed. (christopherstrunk@yahoo.com)

DEAD STOP – *Live for Nothing* (Havoc, LP)

Complete shredability, here—did I spell that right? Well, you get the idea. Another shit-hot dose of old-school hardcore punk by this Belgian band, who is calling it quits after a recent US tour. Mainly loud 'n fast, although the final song, "Letting Go," slows it down to a tension-filled trot. "Locked Inside" also features a bit of a slower pace. Otherwise, they thrash like maniacs and the songs have both brevity and catchiness. Nothing complicated here, either musically or lyrically—straight to the point and the simplicity works like a charm. (PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

FLAK (Police Target, 7" EP)

Raw, speedy hardcore punk—had me thinking of Christ on Parade a little, although there are some double-speed thrash parts. Rough production, rough vocals, rough songs—you get the idea. Lyrics detailing the carnage caused by mankind, along with a critique of the papacy ("Hitler Pope"). Another Pittsburgh band with a nasty sound, and that's a positive. (PO Box 19205, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, policetargetrecords@gmail.com)

GOUKA – *Program* (Putrid Filth Conspiracy, LP)

There's no way to avoid the D-word here, but that's Gouka's inspiration, though it's not straight tribute like Disclose. In fact, while it's a raw sound, it's still accessible. Tempos vary from blazing speed to more reasonably paced pillage, such as "Program." The drumming by Morita doesn't strictly follow a d-beat, either—it's in there but he adds complex patterns, as well. Blazing guitar and bass and harsh yells from Shinohara (who doubles on bass, here). And the lack of a lyric sheet isn't a detracting factor—the power provides a direct connection. (Box 7092, 20042 Malmö, SWEDEN, www.putridfilth.com)

PEDESTRIANS – Future Shock (Residue, LP/Criminal IQ, CD)

Following a demo and a 7" EP, here's the first full-length album for this Chicago band and, I'm not lying, I've been listening to it almost every day for the last week.

That doesn't happen with too many records anymore. Consider it an endorsement. Pedestrians build on the city's tradition of combining melody with kick-ass punk rock, while not sounding derivative of anyone. A sound that comes from the gut and that also goes for the lyrics. Although those words take more of a roundabout way to make their point, there's really no missing the point. Loud, memorable songs, at a mid-to-fast tempo, that stick in your head—there's a brashness in the production that has warmth and edginess. (Residue: PO Box 478101, Chicago, IL 60647, residuerecords@gmail.com. Criminal IQ: 3540 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60657, www.criminaliq.com)

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT / OUTRAGED – split (Unholy Thrash, 7" EP)

East coast meets west coast—two thrashing bands. PosiForce continue to effectively mix the speed and mosh quotient. Not quite on the level of the first EP but plenty ripping, nonetheless. Outraged, last heard on a split with Tropiezo, bust out some manic hardcore *en Espanol* with good results. (PO Box 675, Santa Cruz, CA 95061)

SET TO EXPLODE (Grave Mistake, CDEP)

Classic DC-style hardcore with modern touches by this band that includes people from Striking Distance (vocalist Dave Byrd), Worn Thin and other bands. One part of their theme song "Set To Explode" bears some resemblance to the breakdown from Minor Threat's "Screaming At A Wall." For a change of pace, there's the street punk-ish "Never Give In." Lots of anger but also a fighting spirit.

SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE – *Not Here to Make Friends* (Urban Death Mission, LP)

I guess SDM really *doesn't* want to be your friend, despite the fact their guitarist lives on Friendship Ave!). On their first EP, which came out early in the year, they had a song called "Not My Friend" and, here, there's the title track, "Go Away" and "I Don't Need You." The sound of the misanthrope and the agitation comes out in a thorny hardcore punk sound somewhere between their fellow Pittsburghers (is that the way to say it?) Caustic Christ and Submachine. Many of the songs have a mid-tempo bellicose sound, even adding cowbell for "Go Away." The final song, "Nothing Lasts Forever," is repeated from their EP and is a Flipper-like noise-dirge, complete with sax and synth—chaotic but focused. Besides the anti-social sentiments, there are also lyrical brickbats directed at the Bush supporters seeing their kids "coming home in body bags" ("It's All Your Fault"), racist fuckers and political fuckers. I think that covers it. Brute force, no ignorance. (Ian Ryan, 4746 Friendship Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15224, ianryan1@gmail.com)

TOKYO ELECTRON (Empty, CD)

Down 'n dirty bluesy punk—*with* the bass, along with two guitars. A basic sound but, even in its primitivism, there's a good balance between the roughness and production. There's a fullness here and it reaches a pinnacle with the concluding track, "Down On The River." The cover of the Plugz' "Electrify Me" is well done and "Miss Ojos" rocks like crazy. From Arizona, not Tokyo and it'll get your buzz on. (PO Box 12301, Portland, OR 97212, www.emptyrecords.com)

VARIOUS-Gulf Coast Massacre (Psycho Wolf, LP)

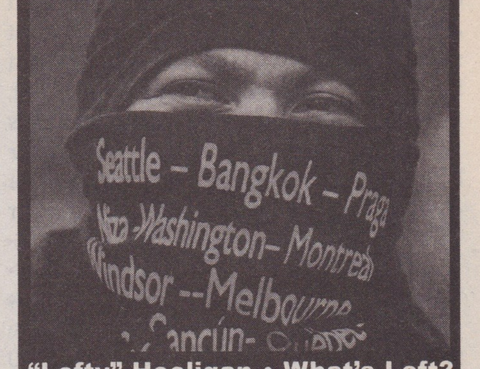
Bands from Texas, Louisiana and Florida—you know, the Gulf Coast, the area ravaged by Hurricane Katrina. A mixed bag of punk, thrash and grind with varying quality though some good stuff, here. A few of the bands are better known—the dark punk of Murder-Suicide Pact, the thrashable Runnamucks (with an acoustic-tinged, rock 'n roll intro) and the high-powered Reason Of Insanity. Other bands making their presence felt are the speedy Janitor and Sick Abuse, crush and thrash by Killswitch (a side band for Reason Of Insanity from 2001—in fact, there's a lot of shared band members/incest here) and the punk rock 'n roll of Die Rotzz. Bad Eating Habits are better heard on their split with ROI than on the demo-quality songs here and the grindier Pretty Little Flower and Insect Warfare aren't as memorable either. Overall, thumbs up. (411 Lindale Houston, TX 77022, www.myspace.com/reasonofinsanity)

I'd be remiss in pointing out one very positive thing about 2005—having just passed the one-year mark of being a columnist for *MRR*. I'd like to thank Golnar and Paul for providing the space and the positive feedback I've received. Much appreciated.

Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903 email: suburbanvoice@earthlink.net. Radio website: http://sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com, Suburban Voice zine on MySpace: www.myspace.com/suburbanvoice

R.I.P. Link Wray...

Go Team, Smash State!



"Lefty" Hooligan • What's Left?

To do is to be. —Albert Camus
To be is to do. —Jean-Paul Sartre
Do be do be do. —Frank Sinatra
—a very old joke

I brought a small stack of books to read while vacationing in Paris. I used to be a voracious fiction reader, but vacation is about the only time I get to read fiction these days. I like to read a novel straight through, in as few sittings as possible, so that I get the maximum impact of the author's plot and character development. That kind of sustained reading is very difficult to accomplish with a forty-hour a week job, plus evenings and weekends filled with plenty of errands to run and things to do. Obviously, long airplane rides are ideal for such immersive reading. I finished Walter Mosley's intriguing *The Man in My Basement* on the flight out from San Francisco to Paris.

We were in Paris for the first two weeks of October, and I did manage to read M. John Harrison's dazzling *Light* over numerous relaxed nights. I picked up the *International Herald Tribune* and *The Guardian* every morning except Sunday, to read in cafés during the day while sipping tea or orange presse and then to dismember in the evening, cutting out articles of interest to save. I visited a couple of English-language bookstores to score a few British gems, among them the comprehensive, incredibly literate *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* by John Clute and Peter Nicholls. I also kept a personal journal in which I recorded dreams, observations, thoughts and ideas while in Paris.

That's just the thin literary slice of my busy and satisfying Parisian holiday. It's amazing what I have time for when I'm not selling eight hours of my weekday to make a living. The weather was stunningly beautiful, and we left Paris before the rioting in the suburbs, which I'll talk about in a future column. Returning to the literary theme with which I began this column, I scheduled *Down and Out in The Magic Kingdom* by Cory Doctorow to read for the flight back to the United States.

Big mistake.

Good science fiction creates imaginative futures, intriguing plots and unusual characters that are simultaneously outlandish and realistic. M. John Harrison accomplishes this with such ease and flair that *Light* is absolutely breathtaking. Cory Doctorow's *Down and Out…* by comparison falls flat on all counts. It's not really comparison that's the problem here. *Down and Out…* is actually a halfway decent read, quick and light. Had I picked up Doctorow before Harrison, everything would have been fine. Reading them in the order I did was like going to a magic show, having Penn and Teller do a sensational opening act, and then having your old uncle Milty dodder out to do his vaudeville card tricks for the finale. Okay, that's a bit harsh. It was like going to a punk show and having the opening band blow away the headliner, so much so that you get up and leave in the middle of the headliner's set. That's essentially what I did with Doctorow. I got halfway through *Down and Out…* and was so unimpressed I didn't bother finishing the book.

Which left me with nothing to read for the eleven-hour flight back. There's only so many times you can watch in-flight movies like *The Fantastic Four* and *About a Boy* without going stir crazy. And while I can sleep on a plane, it's not a very restful sleep.

The point I'm trying to make in this column's opening gambit is that the order in which one does things, the order in which things occur, is often significant. The significance in the order of things illustrated above is in the movement from greater to lesser art. The idea behind a successful promotion like a show featuring several magic acts or several band performances in a row is to do just the opposite, that is, to build from lesser to greater skill, talent, creativity, showmanship, what have you, so that the final act is the climax of the whole event. Doing otherwise, as illustrated by my reading Harrison before Doctorow, is anticlimactic and frequently disappointing.

Unlike my somewhat haphazard reading of sf, it is often assumed that there is some type of progressive element to any such order of things, events or actions. I certainly consider my political trek from anarcho-pacifism through class war anarchism to left communism to be one of progressive development. As Loren Goldner once remarked: "In 35 years in leftist politics, I have met many ex-Stalinists and Maoists who became Trotskyists and council communists; I have never met anyone who went in the opposite direction. Once you have played grand master chess, you rarely go back to checkers." I was playing tiddlie-winks when I was an anarchist. And while there is no denying that my present ultraleft politics would not be what they are without my having been an anarchist, it would be impossible for me to revert to anarchism's simple mindedness after having read Marx without the distortions produced by Leninist glasses.

Speaking of Marx, he believed that the order of events we call history is progressive. Antiquity transitioned into feudalism and feudalism transitioned into capitalism, as capitalism will transition into communism, with each historical stage more advanced than the previous. Marx based this assessment on changes in the mode of economic production in general, and how surplus labor is extracted from the vast majority of the population in particular. In the ancient world surplus labor was obtained from the unpaid labor of slaves, in the feudal world from the rents and taxes imposed on serfs, and in the capitalist world from the wages paid to workers. Whereas Marx made an extensive study of the transition from feudalism to capitalism, his studies of modes of production prior to capitalism were sketchy at best, and a serious argument can be made that feudalism, far from being more advanced, was actually less progressive than antiquity.

In Marx's schema, the mode of production is the economic base from which the superstructure of society—politics, culture, social institutions, etc.—emerges. Even a superficial examination of the Roman Empire, however, reveals that its superstructure was far more advanced than most anything European feudalism produced. Indeed the barbarian invasions and conquest of Rome engendered such a loss of culture, science, knowledge and technology that it took Europe nearly a millennium to recover. How can a less advanced superstructure come out of a supposedly more advanced economic base? What's more, rents and taxes were present in the ancient world, and slavery continued well into feudalism. These discrepancies provide the basis upon which to challenge Marx's notion of historical progress. So while we can reasonably assert that capitalism developed from feudalism which in turn came out of antiquity, and that capitalism is much more advanced than either antiquity or feudalism, it is not possible to draw a continuous line of uninterrupted historical progress from the ancient world to our modern one.

This brings us to the idea that an order of things, events or actions might not be associated with progress at all. This is not the same as randomness by any means. Take the scientific, as opposed to the common, conception of evolution. Evolved life forms are those which are best adapted to a particular environment at a particular time. No value is placed on which life form is more advanced than another; if they survive they are evolved, if they don't survive they no longer exist. Humans are neither more nor less advanced than dinosaurs evolutionarily, and anyone who thinks otherwise would do well to remember that dinosaurs thrived for tens of millions of years in a constantly changing environment, while we are rapidly driving ourselves into extinction with the wholesale destruction of our environment.

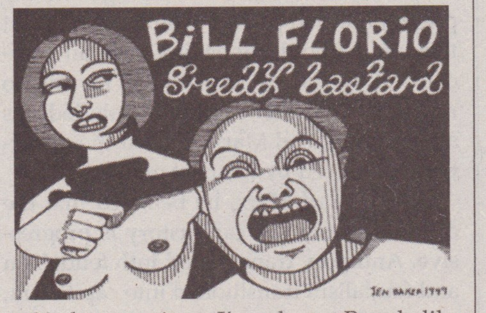
Nothing in these examples is as simple as cause-and-effect. The most straightforward, my political development, involved experiencing and reading widely, thinking about what I'd read and learning from my experiences, not to mention much personal questioning and reflection. Becoming a Marxist at a time when "real existing socialist" regimes were toppling like dominos and Marxism-Leninism seemed destined for the dustbin of history was not a career move, let me tell you. Whether or not we accept Marx's relentlessly progressive characterization of history, transitions from one historical stage to another were anything but linear. According to Marx, a mode of production could be seen as a dialectical relationship between the forces of production (factories, machines and other means of production, technology, specialized skills, etc.) and the relations of production (the class relations in society such as serf and lord, worker and capitalist). As a mode of production develops, the forces of production eventually outstrip the relations of production, which act to constrain the forces of production until a revolutionary change in the entire mode of production occurs.

The nature of causality is even more nebulous with regard to evolution. For while it is possible to claim, for instance, that modern day birds evolved from dinosaurs, it is impossible to ascribe strict cause-and-effect to this process. Nothing in dinosaur DNA or the environment at the time caused birds to come into being. Rather, both presented opportunities that were brought to fruition by more or less random genetic mutation. Nor is it possible to contend that without dinosaurs, birds would not exist. Examples of convergent evolution abound, where two very different species—the ancestors of bats and birds for instance—come to resemble each other and occupy a similar ecological niche. Although we can trace the genetic legacy of dinosaurs in birds then, we cannot determine the significance of that inheritance beyond the obvious, that birds descended from dinosaurs.

Nor can it be asserted that evolution has some teleological endpoint in mind, as in the mistaken belief that all of evolution leads up to the advent of human beings. A renegade Catholic theologian named Teilhard de Chardin postulated that humanity was evolving to an Omega Point of cosmic consciousness that he called the Noosphere. Evolution is nothing if not opportunistic however. If it were opportune for humans to evolve to the point where we lost our intellectual capacity and consciousness, so be it. The fossils of a supposed new species of humanity were found on the Indonesian island of Flores and dubbed *Homo floresiensis*. The evolutionary dwarfing of mammals on isolated islands due to limited food supplies, fewer predators, and fewer competing species for the same ecological niche is a well-known phenomenon. This pygmy species of ancient humans grew not much taller than three feet and exhibited a proportionate reduction in the volume of its brain.

Humans seem to balk at the lackadaisical nature of the evolutionary process. Witness the common perception that humanity is at the top of the evolutionary ladder, or the current debate over "intelligent design." As a species, we seem to prefer that things have some meaning and direction. This is not because we lack the courage to live on the existential edge, but rather because the creation of meaning seems to be part and parcel of being a social animal, which in turn is essential to human nature or species-being or whatever we term the quintessence of humanity. It certainly doesn't sit well that "life, the universe, and everything" might actually be meaningless, and no doubt some wag will point out that to declare everything meaningless is to give it a meaning. Not that people sit around all day pondering the meaning of things. We'd all much rather be entertained.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@mac.com.



Yeah, sometimes I'm a hater. People like to use that word nowadays. A little too much, I might add. Sixteen-year-olds like to accuse people of being haters or being "scene." I pummeled the meaning of this "I'm so scene" thing and basically, in the 80s, you'd just be so "New Wave." Hey, whatever; a douchebag is a douchebag, and although I tend to spew in a comic way, "hater" isn't the word.

But, for the most part, I hate the idea of a *fest*. No one wants to see too many bands in one day, and for the most part, a lot of bands will make a huge effort to play and get screwed one way or another. I went to two fests this year, my all-time annual-fest-attendance-record. Both were really uplifting for the same reasons, and both probably lowered my opinion of all humanity at the same time.

OK, first of all, there was Las Vegas Rollercon, the weekend after my birthday in August. I have to pin sole responsibility for it being great on Jodi Hadabadday, from Long Beach, California. She managed to convince almost all of my favorite west coast punk bands to drive all the way to shitty Las Vegas for fifty dollars and a case of Pabst. She also managed to convince THE SHEMPS to empty our bank accounts (or in some cases, complete strangers' bank accounts) max out our credit cards, and steal from our girlfriends, to fly out to Vegas. Anyhow, it was total mayhem, being held at the Double Down, which is sort of like biker bar meets Nazi headquarters — except it's 24-hours.

Now, the roller derby aspect of the weekend was a bit, um (cough), *interesting* on its own. You know when you meet some band from out of town that seems to think everyone knows who they are and you should already be a fan just because you're in their presence? Then everyone kinda looks at each other and twirls their fingers around their ears when they walk away? Now if you can apply this attitude to every female in any particular room you happen to be in, that's what a roller girl convention is about. You meet one and you're like, "Hi, I'm Bill!" and you get an answer, "I'm Tina Tuna of the Baltimore Barracudas," and then you're like, "Ha, ha, that's cute. What's your name?" "Tina Tuna! Haven't you heard of me?"

Within 20 minutes after the show started, we all realized that very few of the roller girls actually like music, even though they have the fashion and the tattoos and the rock 'n' roll hairdos going for 'em. The 400 girls swapping team t-shirts in the parking lot quickly walked off to the bar at the Hard Rock Casino.

But I got to see all these amazing bands all in one place! The MEAT DEPT., my favorite band from Phoenix—sorta like Chris Elliot meets Ween. TOOTHLESS GEORGE & HIS ONE-MAN BAND—sorta like Hasil Adkins except he forgot a backup band. SHARK PANTS—c'mon now, ya'll heard freakin' SHARK PANTS before. THE MOTHBALLS—if you thought a sax didn't mean action, you never saw this band. THE HOLY MOLEYS, THE DOUBLE D'S, THE BOWELTONES, JEWDRIVER—who we were inspired to make a SKREWDRIVER cover more anti-Semitic for. THE KNIGHTS OF THE NEW CRUSADE—yeah, yeah, I *praised* both those bands in a past column, haw, haw. THE OKMONIKS, who were nice enough to lend us their keyboard as well as upstage us, THE MALAMONDOS, who were the only other suckers to fly out, Jenny Orphan, whose band was asked not to come (big surprise), THE DISSIMILARS, THE RADIO REELERS, and THE KNOCKOUT PILLS.

Although I didn't sleep for about 120 hours and I talked like Donald Duck for a week afterward, it was totally great and totally worth it. I even won a few bucks. But the best thing about it was there wasn't really a headlining band. A whole bunch of my friends and new friends I made came out to check out good music even though they were all schlubs. And of course the best part was, 20-minute sets!

Skip to a couple months later. Hallie Unlovable of THE UNLOVABLES and LOST LOCKER COMBO is getting a ride in the Margo-mobile (a Honda Civic) and she's like, "Bill, why aren't you going to the

No Idea fest with us?" I sort of know what that was because Nichol and Matt went last year, and I'm like, "Isn't it a buncha so-so bands from Florida and like two good bands that drive over from San Diego?"

She's like, "No, this year all these good bands are playing, like us and THE ERGS and the MODERN MACHINES and DILLINGER 4."

So I get home and IM Floyd. "Hey, should I go to that fest in Florida?"

Floyd's like, "Well, it would be great if someone was there that wanted to go to Waffle House with me." So, OK, it was settled. I have frequent flyer miles saved up, so the plane ticket cost me a whopping ten dollars, and I rented a car for like twenty dollars a day.

I was gonna write at length about the great time I had, but I think I'll try it as a series of haikus, to save paper.

Pinhead in da house
Two-hour drive to Tampa
Pinhead can't get home

Josh Jordan is drunk
Non-English Blotto breakfast
Guess who drove him north?

Matt Army parked my car
Toys That Kill dropped me nowhere
Where is my car now?

Josh Jordan is drunk
Will we ever find luggage?
Same shirt for three days

Lance Hahn yells to me
None More Black is so boring…
Lance was once in Beck

That was a bad idea; here are some real highlights:

I saw Japanese kids who spoke no English singing along to THE MODERN MACHINES and THE UNLOVABLES.

BLOOD BATH AND BEYOND really weren't good live either.

ASSHOLEPARADE had the best pit I've seen in years.

DILLINGER 4 at 4 p.m. hungover is much different than them at midnight pumped up and ready.

Homeless guy grabbing the mike at a BBQ gets Davey Tilt guitar accompaniment.

All in all, I hate most fests because the organizers usually pick bands I don't like; this one had so many bands you had to like a bunch of 'em. I believe there were 100 bands and 1000 people attending. As far as I know, no one got a bad slot, and some of the shows, especially the ones in the middle of the afternoon, were too packed to get into. But I think Davey put it well when he told me after, "I get really bummed at fests because it's hard to bro down with anyone." This is true. I saw probably 100 people I knew, but barely had time to have a decent conversation because there were too many damn bands playing. The difference between these shows and something like Hellfest or Warped Tour is that everyone is there to see good music—well except anyone wearing roller skates. The bands are not concerned with getting paid or "exposure;" they're there because they want to see the other bands.

Top two moments:

Everyone singing along to THE ERGS—like 100 people! The ERGS are my favorite band and though I have been made fun of for doing this in the car, *everyone sang along to the guitar solo!*

All weekend, in the back of my mind, I was like, hmmm, I did write that dopey column about AGAINST ME last year, and this is their town. Will my ticket be suddenly "lost" when I get there? Will I get dirty looks? Will I have my tire slashed, the seventh time this year? After two days, all I got was people hugging me and asking why the fuck THE SHEMPS weren't playing. I was feeling a little dissed by the handful of people who can't take a joke. So, I walked over to the big venue to see THE SOVIETTES and someone dumped a trashcan on my head and ran away. So, I was standing there a little wet from the ice cubes and paper cups and thinking, "Wow, I'm infamous! Someone actually felt the need to dump trash on me and run away! I'm like the Antichrist to spineless wieners! I thought this was gonna be fun, but I didn't expect it to be this life-affirming!" The best part was when I was walking to another show an hour later and some kids like, "I heard Tom from AGAINST ME! dumped a trash can on your head." I was like, 'Oh man, that's awesome, but really, that's not cool — I'm sure Tom's not a pussy, why would he run? I was alone at a show in his town surrounded by hundreds of his fans? If he did it and was standing there smiling when I pulled that can off I would have probably hugged him. Don't spread rumors like that." He was like, "Yeah you're right. What a stupid story. I bet you had someone do it to you so you'd have something to write about." I laughed.

As usual, feel free to write me at bill@candids.com. Ciao.

FELIX HAVOC
FIN DE SIÈCLE ANGST

I missed a column or two because I was on tour across the USA and Europe first with Kylesa and then with Regulations. Every time I go on the road I plan to do some writing, but it almost never happens. Thanks a lot to everyone who came out to see the bands. The Regulations tour went way better than I expected and I am 100% amped on that band every day. It was very rewarding to use the resources at my disposal to bring that band around to play for people across the US. Everyone who sets up shows, plays in opening bands, and feeds or houses bands gets much respect from myself and the Swedes.

When last I wrote in these pages we were discussing DC hardcore records. As I said before, the story of DC hardcore has been told already in the book *Dance of Days*. But as a collector I wanted to focus a little bit more on the artifacts themselves. This month we are only going to talk about *two* records, but don't sweat it—things will pick up a lot next month.

The last record we discussed was the Bad Brains *Pay to Cum* EP. Along with this 1980 gem the Teen Idles *Minor Disturbance* EP set the stage for the 1981 hardcore explosion. The Teen Idles EP, in retrospect, is not that great. It's cool and sloppy hardcore punk showing the raw enthusiasm and energy of the new generation of hardcore kids in DC. It was clearly a step in the right direction, and considering it was the first release on Dischord Records it definitely laid the groundwork for the explosion of the scene that was to come. We have to remind ourselves that in 1980 for a bunch of teenage kids to start a band and put out their own record was still pretty radical. Most bands were still trying to "get signed" and most labels at the time had some sort of distribution deal or other ties to either major labels or large independents. There is little doubt that the Teen Idles and Bad Brains shows and releases were the catalyst that propelled a number of amazing bands to the forefront of DC hardcore in the ensuing years. Certainly, many kids saw the Teen Idles shows and record and thought, "Hey I can do that." Dischord, with its no bullshit DIY attitude, practically invented the DIY aesthetic and code of conduct as we know it. Despite not releasing many good records in the last 20 years, this label is still the benchmark of integrity in one of the most corrupt and venal industries on earth.

To my mind the most important year for hardcore in DC was 1981 and this year produced two of the most important hardcore releases of all time, namely the self-titled Minor Threat 7" and Bad Brains ROIR Cassette. One or both of these releases are on most any US hardcore fans top five list.

It is ironic that one of the most important recordings in the history of hardcore was actually originally a cassette only release. ROIR—"Reach Out International Records"—was an NYC outfit that in the spirit of misguided futurism latched onto the cassette tape as the format of tomorrow. This "tape only" label has had most of its better releases finally re-issued some 20 years later on vinyl. The irony of this fact is that the new label chose to embrace cassette as a futuristic format that was going to replace old-fashioned vinyl. The inserts on the tapes actually carried the following disclaimer "Warning: this album length performance not available on vinyl" Decades later vinyl stands strong and cassette and CD are going the way of the buffalo.

Regardless, the ROIR sessions, as they became known, feature some of the most incendiary music ever recorded. The Bad Brains brought a level of musicianship and a sense of vision to hardcore that their younger peers could only hope to match with raw enthusiasm. The rampaging bass lines, high-speed drumming, wailing vocals, and, most importantly, shredding guitar on the ROIR tape took music as it was known at the time directly to the next level. Keep in mind that the top-selling records of 1981 were by Pat Benetar, REO Speedwagon, the Moody Blues, Foreigner, and Styx.

Baffling many to this day are the presence of several stoned out reggae jams on this recording. The Rasta influence was already heavy on these dudes. Throughout the 80s it was common to re-dub this tape without the reggae songs. Today there are some who feel that the song order was quite deliberate and the mellow interlude of the reggae jams only serves to amplify the intensity of the hardcore ragers. Similar theories have been advanced about some of Black Sabbath's recordings as well, the whole idea of a "calm before the storm" building up the intensity. The "dive bomb scream" intro of "Supertouch" after the tropical placidity of "Jah Calling" is like waking up in a foxhole to an incoming air raid after dreaming about a sandy beach.

The cover of this record featured a lightning bolt striking the capital dome on a bold cover in the Rasta colors of red, gold, and green. The tape itself came on red, gold, and green cassettes and the true diehards bought all three colors. The cover art was meant to imply the wrath of the almighty smiting down the corrupt and wicked. From a musical perspective, however, that lightning bolt signified the pure power and intensity of hardcore delivering the youth from the days of old and smashing away the chains of mediocrity in music.

The guitar leads on this record are overdubbed in a style that makes it sound like they are being beamed in on a transmitter from outer space. I've been listening to this record for almost 25 years and my heart beat still speeds when it's on. When the solo in "Big Takeover" kicks in I can't help but gnash my teeth, clench my fists, and close my eyes. When this came out there was really no band that sounded anything like what the Bad Brains were doing, and lets face it, this effort has never really been topped either. It's quite probable that with the exception of some early Discharge recordings this record will *never* be equaled or topped.

The album starts off with "Sailin' On," which is a quintessential Bad Brains jam. The rumbling bass line is fast and frenetic with Darryl Jennifer's "walking" fills that probably owe more to Bootsy Collins than Sid Vicious. It is tempting to write something like "it's the bass lines that *make* this record" but the fact is each of these dudes was such an incredible musician and so perfectly in sync that the combined effect is simply overpowering. The guitar tone on this record is perfect and Dr. Know shows his amazing ability to plow through raw and biting riffs that are catchy and simple and shift gears to serious fretboard gymnastics. The result is a style of hardcore that is neither "raw and simple" nor "complex and technical," but rather a combination of the best elements of primal thrash and virtuosity. "Sailin' On" features a simple buzzsaw riff with several variations from verse to chorus and bridge. On the first verse and chorus, HR shouts and snarls in a typically hardcore style, but on the second verse he busts in with a soulful "*whooo ooo ooo*" that sounds perfectly matched to the song, but that *nobody* could get away with doing today. The bridge features a short build-up and one of Dr Know's otherworldly solos, followed by another chorus and a verse of just the "*whooo ooo ooo.*" Then on the last verse HR sings out the vocals instead of shouting them, returning to a snarl on the last line. The song breaks down into a drum roll and short, airy, acoustic interlude.

There is not even a second before a snare roll announces the onslaught of "Don't Need It." The main intro riff for this song is actually a pretty complex sort of walking scale, and it must be pretty hard to play because I never hear people covering this jam. The verse is more mid-paced and Dr. Know kind of lets the chord ring out while the bass and drums race ahead. There is a quick fill between the first and second verse with a quick build up that breaks into a breathtaking bass fill. The song leads out with an amazing conclusion with a quick guitar lead that transitions into a thunderous drum outro punctuated by sharp stabs of guitar.

"Attitude," like "Sailin' On," calls on both a spirit of rebellious defiance and a divine inspiration. "Attitude" seems more based in UK punk than a lot of other Bad Brains tunes, but at three times the speed and with some characteristically rampaging bass fills in the chorus. During the outro there's a quick breakdown where the guitar has a riff over-dubbed in such a blatant manner that it adds a whole extra dimension to the song. I'm sure the studio engineer was just like "I'm punching in the guitar here" but the difference in the tone between the base track and over dub is so blatant that it adds a whole extra level to the intensity.

The bass intro for "Regulator" sets the tone for the whole song. This is a surprisingly restrained song, much slower than the previous numbers. The power in this one comes less from a strong riff than the driving bass line. You can hear the righteous anger in HR's voice as he rails against the powers that be. The song shifts gear abruptly into a rapid fire staccato driving by HR's shouts against the "Regulator."

The most triumphant bass once again brings us back to the known for the intro to *Banned in DC*. Another song with a fairly simple and direct punk riff but with some amazingly hot bass playing and at high speeds. The intro bust is a high speed, high tension build up and erupts in HR's bone chilling scream. The breakdown in this song features a strong and direct bass that mirrors the guitar riff with only stabs of guitar. Then there is one of those amazing "beamed from outer space" guitar solos. This lead is much slower and more deliberate than some of the other leads. And in the midst of it the bass breaks out into a sick fill

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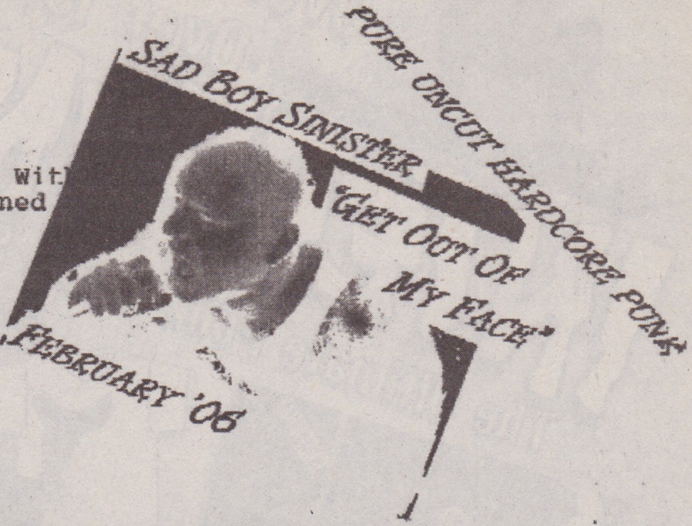
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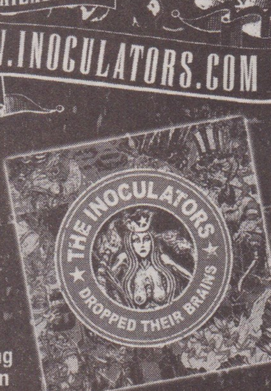
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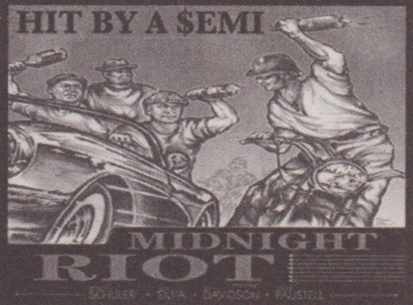
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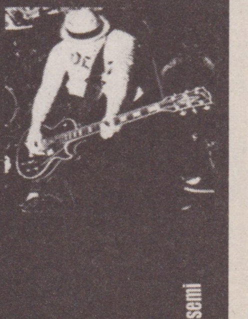

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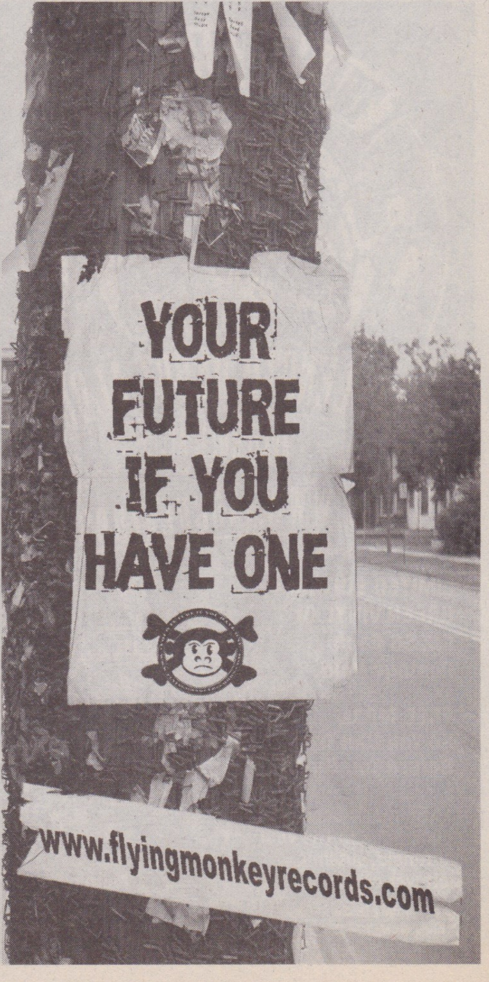
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at just the right moment.

"Jah Calling" is a short dub reggae number. Cool for what it is, I don't mind the reggae parts of this record any more, but I don't really have much to say about them either.

As mentioned earlier the screaming dive bomb effect (I'm assuming that's just HR's voice with some studio gimmick) that announces the arrival of "Supertouch/ Shitfit" seems about five times more intense sandwiched in between two mellow reggae numbers. "Supertouch" is another short and fast rager with the defiant, yet positive lyrics HR was known for. It segues seamlessly into "Shitfit," which features one of the more important crunchy build-ups in the early years of hardcore. One can hear a lot of the future of "mosh" and metal influenced hardcore in some of these build-ups and intro busts. Luckily, unlike future generations of talentless hacks to who turned short breakdowns and intro build ups into entire songs, this jam is just setting the stage for some intense fast hardcore. The vocals on this are so ridiculously fast and sped up it would sound cartoonish if anyone but HR was singing it. The intro build up returns at the end to underpin a wicked guitar lead. And following the pattern, some ill bass fills as well.

"Leaving this Babylon" is another reggae number, which closes out the first side of the tape.

Press the eject and flip over to "Fearless Vampire Killers," which starts out with a fearsome guitar intro then busts into some more over the top fast hardcore. There is some more of that "walking" kind of scale arrangement, which must have been tricky to play.

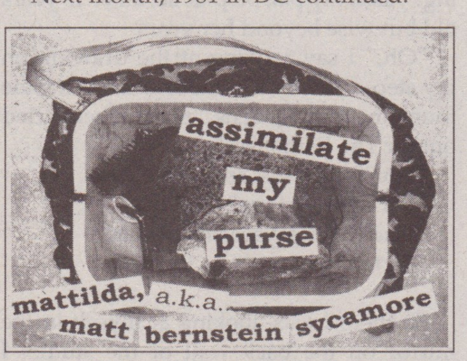
Before you can catch your breath "I"—which is another one of the uncharacteristically slow jams—kicks in. Once again nailed down by a thunderously rumbling bass line this song has a sort of "freight train rolling through" groove to it that sets it apart from most of the other songs on the tape. HR's vocals are at their most soulful on this during the end of the verses. There's some great call and response backing vocals in the chorus. A sick guitar solo and then HR does this weird yodel kind of shit at the end of the song that no one else in hardcore could ever get away with.

"Big Take Over" might be my favorite song on this record. The intro bust is breathtaking, a pounding drum beat while some dude cited in the liner notes as "Dave Id" taps out SOS in Morse code. The guitar builds up and busts into a sick build up that explodes into the song like a bomb going off. It's not super fast, but the riff is strong and the bass punishing. The highlight of this song, however, is the guitar lead. They introduce it with kind of a one, two, three, *GO*! Build up and then it's overdubbed in with so much reverb it sounds like it's beamed directly from Jah into the studio through some cosmic power. The lead itself isn't even terribly fast or complex but like a lead on one of the early Rolling Stones classics, it has this "less is more" approach that makes it stick in your head for life.

"Pay to Cum" was recorded several times before this session, and we talked about some of the earlier versions in the last column. This version is faster and tighter and when compared to the 7" and demo versions you can see the logical progression in speed and intensity as the hardcore trajectory hit the stratosphere.

"Right Brigade" starts out with a marching intro build up followed by some intense riffing. but it's the breakdown in this song that is the most crucial. In fact I'd have to place this in the top five of most influential breakdowns of the early hardcore era. One can hear the pounding, galloping groove of this breakdown in so much hardcore today it's hard to think that so many bands trace their sound back to a few seconds of this song. The breakdown backs up another extra-terrestrial guitar lead, probably the lead on this record most rooted in 70s hard rock and blues. "Right Brigade" comes to a screeching halt and there's another reggae number "I Luv I Jah," which is both the weakest and longest jam on the tape. The finale of the whole session is a sick one-measure build up and fade out titled "intro" which has me mystified to this day.

Next month, 1981 in DC continued!



Colonialism: the Musical

"Riots Mar Summit of the Americas." "Protest Turns Violent." "Violence Flares at Anti-Bush Protest." Virtually all of the news headlines about the protests against the pro-globalization Summit of the Americas in the beach resort of Mar del Plata, Argentina, began in a similar way. Of course, this is to be expected from CNN, the BBC or NPR. But my daily news source, Free Speech Radio News, a worker-run collective, carried a shockingly similar story, where they praised the mass demonstration led by soccer star Diego Maradona, but decried the "violence" of protesters who set a bank on fire.

I'm so sick of hearing about property destruction described as "violence." Especially when no one gets hurt—except, of course, masses of people beaten by the cops. Hello—we're talking about a bank! What could be more gorgeous than the most obvious everyday symbol of the violence of capitalism, tumbling to the ground in flames? What could be less empowering than a mass demonstration of thousands of people who fail to challenge the status quo? Any "progressive" news source should be ashamed to equate the burning of a bank with the brutality of institutional oppression.

Speaking of institutions, I actually went to see the movie version of that smash Broadway musical, *Rent*. I wasn't planning on it—I swear—even though I was curious about the part they filmed on Sixth Street in San Francisco. But I got a call from a friend who had free tickets—and the movie was playing at the corporate theater right across the street from my house—so I couldn't really turn it down.

Okay, so the best part is that these nice, white, straight squatters are living in a gorgeous loft space somewhere in downtown New York, 1989, and the evil ruling class landlord who's trying to evict them…is black. Not only is he black, but he used to live with them, until he married into money and became evil—you know how that is. This is the way *Rent* simultaneously erases economic realities and creates a false history—oh wait, that's the whole point!

But the scariest part is the way that the movie drew me in. Never doubt the allure of a false history that contains elements of truth packaged within a well-choreographed spectacle. Here's what happens: the performance artist is having a big show at a huge abandoned building, and it escalates into a skirmish with the cops. Okay, I cried when the cops attacked the protesters, I admit it. But then the whole crew ends up at Life Cafe, one of the grossest restaurants in all of downtown New York—someone dragged me there once for some kind of tofu stir fry cooked on the meat grill, or something. It's open 24 hours, but this is New York—there are a lot of things open 24 hours.

Anyway, the business at Life Cafe will certainly pick up after this lovely movie, since there's a scene filmed inside the cafe where the squatting preppy straight guy filmmaker and his straight ex-junkie roommate with AIDS, the white performance artist and her black lawyer girlfriend, the Latina drag queen and her black boyfriend face-off against the evil black landlord and his white cronies. They do a song about the joys of bohemian life, "Viva la Vie Boheme," which is choreographed on top of the tables and features numerous queer gyrations that feel almost vaguely maybe close to realistic, or at least glamorous and confrontational, and somewhere in the song the straight, white ex-junkie guy with AIDS and the Latina junkie who's courting him notice that their watch alarms go off at the same time—AZT break! Oh, and in a terrible flourish someone writes "Fight AIDS" on the blackboard, and I think they all say "ACT UP Fight Back Fight AIDS." Or something like that—that's all we get for AIDS activism in 1989, at the height of ACT UP.

But I cry before that, somewhere in the scene where the bohemians face-off against the landlords, who leave. If only it worked that way in real life.

There's lots more. The melting pot HIV-positive support group is so realistic—there's the black professional woman, the white woman beatnik, the white theater guy (I guess maybe he's a fag), the straight, white ex-junkie guy, the Latina drag queen and her boyfriend—everyone's in it together, even the HIV-negative (but so supportive!) preppy, straight filmmaker squatter is there, turning the crank on his camera as the participants slowly disappear. That's right—everyone looks great until they fade to nothing. Except the Latina drag queen—she pays for her gender transgression, lesions and intravenous drips in the hospital bed as her friends try to cheer her up until it's time for the graveyard tell-all.

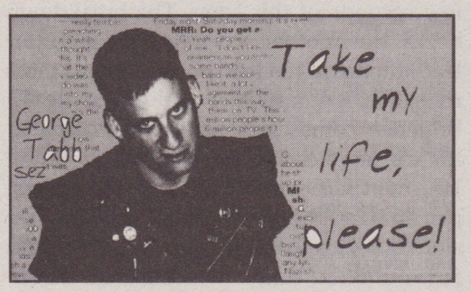
At the graveyard, we're getting some chosen family drama, because the evil black landlord is now dating the Latina junkie stripper with no morals, stealing her from the straight, white ex-junkie. They all fight, then the lesbians are getting married and the Latina junkie prostitute's dying—but she's revived—just in time for the grand finale!

But what about San Francisco's Sixth Street? It's the scene of a New Year's street party outside a glowing corporate Nothing Beats the Wiz store (created just for the shoot) – everyone's supposedly returning from Times Square in time for a quick glimpse of San Francisco's Market Street. Okay, so we've got San Francisco's skid row masquerading as New York's skid row in the movie version of the musical that claims to represent the combustible downtown New York of the late eighties while profiting from the literal and figurative death of that very culture. And these are just a couple layers of this atrocity.

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz addresses this layering of colonialism in her new book, *Blood on the Border: a Memoir of the Contra War*, when she describes some of the ways in which the northeastern part of Nicaragua in the early eighties reminded her of Oklahoma, where she grew up: widespread rural poverty, Hank Williams blasting from the houses, evangelical Protestant hymns, and a hunger for US products. But when do we get the musical?

***

Mattilda, a.k.a. Matt Bernstein Sycamore is the editor, most recently, of *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* (Soft Skull 2004) and the author of *Pulling Taffy* (Suspect Thoughts 2003). She also selected and introduced the just-released *Best Gay Erotica 2006*. Mattilda lives for feedback, so send her love letters and delicious threats via, resistingassimilation@hotmail.com, PO Box 640047, San Francisco, CA 94164-0047.



"Why are you sweating in this drawing?" asks my pal, Stephanie, all of 18 years old but wise beyond her years.

"Oh," I say, looking at the drawing on my step-dad's wall of me and the fearsome foursome from Queens, "that's when I tried out for The Ramones!"

"You?" she asks, sort of amazed.

"It's a crazy story," I tell her.

"And?" she says, arms crossed.

So I tell her.

*

So there I was, looking at myself in the mirror on the back wall of the studio. I looked like Dee Dee, what with the black spiky hair, five-dollar Rayban knockoffs, short-sleeved black T-shirt, and sneakers. I sounded like Dee Dee, especially when I counted off "1-2-3-4" in that high pitched whine, and sang Wart Hog. And I certainly played like Dee Dee, what with the bass slung really low, down past my balls, and almost only using rapid-fire down-strokes. To my right, on the other side of the stage, stood the guitar player. He was wearing a white Mosrite, a yellow T-shirt, faded blue jeans, yellow socks, and black sneakers. Johnny Ramone. Mr. Fashion. And behind me was Marky. The drummer. The one you call "homeless" when he has no girlfriend. The one who drools out of both sides of his mouth when the stage is level. The one who you can tell is at your front door because he knocks, but never knows when to come in. The one who stays up all night studying for a urine test. The one who, never mind, you get the idea. So there I was, with Johnny and Marky Ramone. Onstage. This in itself is amazing. What is more amazing, however, is that this was an audition. For the Ramones. The Johnny Apple seeds of Punk Rock. God. And there I was. But let me back up a bit...

*

The worst stomachache I ever had was when I was like eighteen. I remember lying on my mom and step-dad's couch, the blue one with the three mattresses, so when my brothers and I came to visit them in New York, we had a place to sleep. I was in extreme pain, and I remember my parent's friend, Richard, coming over and looking at me. I was holding my stomach, and I had a fever of about one hundred and four. He says, "Gee lad, you don't look so well. You look kinda pale. Like one of those Ramones people you are always going on about." Through my clenched teeth I told him to fuck off, which made my mom and step-dad Nick both laugh. Finally, when I was able to fry an egg on my chest, I was taken to the family doctor.

As soon as I walk in the door, my doctor says, "Hi George. You don't look so good. You look very pale. Like one of the Ramones guys you are always talking about or wearing on your shirts." I just nod my head. He tells me to go into the back examining room, and take off my clothes, which consist of a leather jacket, Ramones T-shirt, sweat pants (I couldn't wear jeans 'cause my stomach was so fucking bloated), and sneakers. I tell him okay, and the nurse shows me the way.

I get into the back room, and take off my clothes down to my underwear. I then sit on that table shaped thing with all the white paper all over it. It sticks to me 'cause I am so sweaty from the fever. Then my doctor walks in. He listens to my heart with that thingamajigger, and feels around my stomach. He then tells me to pull off my underwear, and lay on my side. I do. I hear him opening a packet of something, but can't see since I am not facing him. Suddenly I feel something going straight up my ass. It is his finger. I scream in pain, and he asks, "Does that hurt?" I scream, "Of course it fucking does!" He says, "Oh," and continues to move his finger around up there. I scream some more, and finally he takes his finger out. Slowly. It feels like I just went to the bathroom on the table. But I didn't. Then the doctor tells me that there is something definitely wrong. I ask him if I can regain my dignity and put my underwear back on, he says to wait a second.

My doctor calls in the nurse who showed me to the room. My heart sinks into my feet. She is beautiful, as are all members of the opposite sex to an eighteen year-old virgin. She walks in and sees me lying on my side. She kinda half smiles at me, and I feel worse. Then she walks around to my backside, where my doctor is standing. He tells her he wants her to feel something, and before I know it, her finger is up my ass. I scream in pain some more, and she laughs. Finally she takes her finger out, and they both leave the room. I get dressed and walk out to the lobby where my mom and Nick and the doctor are talking. The doctor is telling them that he thinks that maybe my appendix is bursting, and that I need to get to the hospital. My mom and Nick look very worried, but I kinda don't really notice, since I am busy wondering if the nurse and doctor shoulda wiped my butt after they were through.

The next thing I know, I am at New York Hospital, the emergency room. My fever is still really high, and I have begun to hallucinate, as I often do when I get fevers. I also start to babble, which I often do as well. I look around me, and there are all sorts of injuries and such. One lumberjack-looking guy is holding his hand in a towel, and there is blood all over his lap and pants. Some Indian woman, with a dot on her head, is rocking back and forth, screaming in a high-pitched whine. Some guy, who I must assume is a cab driver, has a bloody head and face, and is bitching about someone cutting him off, and getting the fare first. And then there is some cop who keeps throwing up white stuff, which I assume are powdered donuts. Wonderful. I love New York.

*

Finally I am taken in an elevator with a doctor and a bunch of residents. The doctor explains to his students that I may be a classic example of an appendix rupture, and then pulls down my sweat pants and sticks his finger up my ass. I yelp in pain, and I swear I hear some of the residents laugh. The doctor feels around for a while, and then withdraws his finger. I somehow say through my delirium, "Wipe, toilet paper, wipe". No such luck. Suddenly I feel another finger go up my ass. Then another. And another. And so on. Not all at once of course, just one finger from one resident at a time. They all feel around, roughly, I may add, and then withdraw from my backside. At this point, my stomach is not hurting nearly as much as my ass. Finally I hear a girl resident say it is her turn, and then feel her finger go up my ass. As she is feeling around, she puts her face in front of mine and I see her. She has long brown hair, green eyes, and nice white teeth. Cute. Suddenly she gets a look of recognition in her eyes, and I again feel my heart sink into my feet. She then says, "Hey, aren't you George, the guy from the band that can not be mentioned?" Stupid fever.

I am taken to an operating room where a doctor tells me he is going to take out my appendix. He also tells me I look really pale, like that New York Puerto-Rican band, the Ramones. He then puts a mask over my face, and shoots me up with Sodium Pentathal. I sing "Twenty-twenty-twenty four hours to go, I wanna be sedated" as I pass out.

*

I awake in a hospital bed, with Nick and my mom by my bedside. I still have a very high fever, and ask Nick what is going on. He tells me that they removed my appendix, but there was nothing wrong with it. My mom looks really worried. I nod my head, and start to feel around to make sure they didn't remove anything else. I start to move my hand toward my crotch, under the sheets, of course, and suddenly feel something really smooth. Where my dick should be. It's Gone! Oh my God, they cut off my dick. My heart starts to race. I start to grasp around frantically, and finally find it, below the smooth skin. I sigh a breath of relief, as I realize that they only shaved off my pubic hair. Then I start to think about what they used to do that for, and start to panic again. My mother asks me what's wrong, and I can almost see tears in her eyes. I force myself to relax, and tell her it's nothing, I'm fine.

*

I stay at the hospital for another week, while more tests are run on me. Finally the doctors figure out I have something called Camphlobacter, a bacterial infection. They begin to treat it with antibiotics, and my fever begins to go down. But that doesn't stop them from coming by everyday, with a bunch of residents, and sticking their fingers up my ass. I am beginning to feel like a one-finger bowling ball.

Also, while I am at the hospital, I kinda develop a crush on a nurse named Wanda. She is from Long Island, and has that cute accent. She and my mom become good friends, and Wanda looks after me really good. We really begin to like one another, but then it happened. It was my bowels. They decided to move. After like almost a week. And they didn't just move, it was like a mudslide. And I couldn't walk cause I was tied to an IV, and was stitched up. So I yelled for a bedpan, and really made a mess. Then Wanda came in to clean me up. Wanda. The nice girl from Long Island. The girl my mom liked. And there I was, helpless and butt deep in shit. Anyway, it sucked. She kept telling me it was okay, and "normal," but I knew it wasn't. Here I was, this eighteen year-old virgin punk rocker, and this girl, Wanda, had to wipe my butt and clean me up. The next day I told my mom I didn't want Wanda around anymore. She asked why, but I demanded that she just do it. She did. I had a different nurse for the rest of my stay. An old woman I didn't feel sexually weird around. On the way out of the hospital, I ran into Wanda, who gave me her phone number, and asked me to call her for a date. I never did. Even though I was still a virgin, and she was really cool and great, I could never date a girl who did "that" with me. I am still banging my head against the wall.

*

Stomachaches came, and stomachaches went, and every time I went to the doctor's office, he stuck his finger up my ass. It got to the point where I'd walk into his office, and just pull down my pants and lay on my side. It soon got to be that it didn't matter what was wrong, he was gonna stick his finger up there one way or another. I began to think that maybe it was my doctor, and he got thrills from invading my anus, so I went and saw another guy. He too stuck his finger up my ass. My ass has seen more fingers than a used piano. And eventually, I got used to it. Which brings us, of course, to the Ramones.

*

There I was, auditioning for the Ramones. Earlier that week, I had run into Dee Dee and Johnny, both within a half hour of one another. I first ran into Dee Dee, and he told me he quit the Ramones a couple of days before. When I asked him why, he told me he was sick of it, and wanted to do other stuff. I told him I understood completely. I, of course, didn't. Then I ran into Johnny, who told me that Dee Dee just quit, and asked me if I knew any bass players. I kinda turned my head to the side like a dumb dog. He looked at me, and said nothing. Then I told him I played bass. Then it was his turn to cock his head like a dumb dog. Actually, more like a parrot. He then says, in his nasal, parrot-y voice, "George, I thought you played guitar." Doh. I explained to him that the bass and guitar were very similar. The only difference being the two extra strings on a guitar, so really, bass is easier. He said, "Oh." I told him I had a bass, and would love to audition. In reality, I had had a bass, but had given it to my old girlfriend. He said to call Monty, their tour manager, who I knew very well from having worked with them. Monty is like the fifth Ramone. He is this overweight, middle-aged, balding guy who tells the band what to do and when. When the band is, for instance, in the recording studio, and one of them has to take a leak, they raise their hand and say, "Monty, Monty, I gotta go pee-pee." I'm not kidding. I worked for them, remember. Anyway, I tell Johnny I will, and he says he'll see me at the audition in a couple of days.

I remember practicing and practicing for that audition. I borrowed my bandmate's bass, and I would stand in front of my girlfriend Wendy, Nick, and my mom for hours and hours, acting like Dee Dee while playing along to Ramones' albums. They all thought I was wonderful, and was like a real Ramone. And to tell you the truth, I was. I had that Ramone shit down cold. I mean, I'd been preparing for it for like, ten years. And now I was ready. I'd play along with "Blitzkrieg Bop" and "Pet Semetary," which they played in a different key live then they played on the record. I'd burn through "Go Mental" and "Shock Treatment." Man, I was ready. The day of the audition, my mom, Nick, and Wendy wished me luck, and I went on the job interview of a lifetime.

*

I arrived at S.I.R. on Twenty-Fourth Street, the place where the Ramones were holding their auditions. There were like a bunch of bass players there. I couldn't believe it. They were all standing around this hallway, waiting for their turn to show the Ramones what they got. There was this really tall guy with really curly hair—a 'fro—and he wanted to be a Ramone. There was this little, short, over-weight guy who was balding, and he wanted to be a Ramone. There was this black guy with a mohawk, and he wanted to be a Ramone. There was even a girl. I asked the little bald guy why he wanted to be a Ramone. He said, "It's a good gig, the money is right." I asked the curly haired guy the same thing, he said "I'd rather be in Van Halen, but this will have to do." What a bunch of fucking morons. Here they were, getting a chance to play with the best band in the world, and they don't even care. I knew I had to play better than them. To be the true Ramone that I am inside. So I left them in the hall to be with one another, and went and sat on a couch and waited for my turn. One after one, the bass players filed in, played for like one minute, and left. On their way out, most of them bitched that they were better musicians, anyway, and didn't need this "gig." Assholes.

Finally it was my turn. I walked in the room and saw Johnny and Marky on stage. John said, "Hi George" in his bird-with-a-cold voice, and I said hello back. Then Monty said, "Oi Vey, George Tabb. What are you doing back? Couldn't hack it as a roadie, so here ya are, huh?" Then he laughed, and everyone in the room did as well. I sorta laughed, nervously, and went about plugging in the bass to my digital tuner and tuning it. Then Johnny walked over to me and stopped me. He said that using a digital tuner was not "Ramone-like," and to use the strobo-tuner. The antique piece of shit that both he and Dee Dee used for years. I said okay, and wasted twice the amount of time using that pile of junk. Finally I was ready to play, and both Johnny and Monty remarked how much I looked like Dee Dee. Johnny asked me what songs I knew, and I told him I knew 'em all. He called me a wiseguy, and then gave me their set list. He said start, so I said, "Hey, we're the Ramones, and this one's called The Blitzkrieg Bop, 1-2-3-4!" and we all went into the song. It was amazing. It sounded great, and here I was, playing on stage with my idols. We got through that song, and Marky went into "Lobotomy," we did that, and I counted "1-2-3-4" and we went into "Rockaway Beach." I got to sing the songs as well as play them, since Joey wasn't there. We then played a whole bunch of songs, and the whole time, Monty sat there with a stunned look on his face. At one point, Monty said I was better than Dee Dee ever was. We played some more, and I made the mistake of playing "Rock 'n' Roll Radio" with some upstrokes. Marky stopped the song and said, "Play the song with all down strokes. Upstrokes are cheating. And Ramones don't cheat." Drummer. So, I played with all down strokes. Anyway, I was in there for almost an hour, almost sixty times longer than anyone else.

When we finally finished playing, and we were putting our guitars away, both Monty and Johnny walked up to me. They were both very excited, and both told me how great I was. Monty said, "Georgie Ramone, I like the sound of that" and Johnny smiled. I asked them if I did okay, and they said yes, and that it was now between me and this guy, Chris (who, as it turns out, was CJ). I almost fainted. Then Johnny says to Monty, "Monty, drive Georgie Ramone home," and Monty drove me home in the Ramones van.

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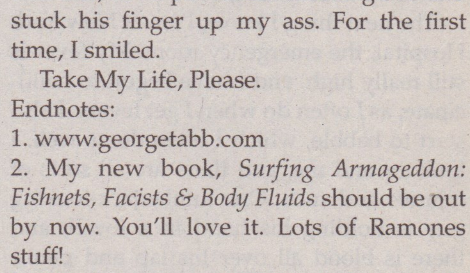
For the next week or so I was a wreck. One part of me knew I was in the Ramones, and the other part of me knew that no matter what I did, or how good I was, I was still gonna get a finger in my ass. I finally heard from Monty that they picked CJ cause he was younger than me, and they needed young blood. I thought it was silly that the Ramones were all in their mid-to-late forties, and here they picked some teenager over a twenty-eight year old. But whatever. I knew I was good. But still, it really hurt.

I went to the doctor last week for my yearly check-up. He asked me how I was doing, and I told him I was fine. We got to talking as I was undressing and preparing to be examined, and he asked me how my music was going, and whatever happened to those Ramones guys I used to always talk about and wear on my shirts. I told him they where still around. And he told me so was this, as he put on his rubber glove and stuck his finger up my ass. For the first time, I smiled.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:
1. www.georgetabb.com
2. My new book, *Surfing Armageddon: Fishnets, Facists & Body Fluids* should be out by now. You'll love it. Lots of Ramones stuff!
3. Thanks again to *MRR* for being around all these years, and to Soft Skull for doing my book! Punk Rock!



LET'S GET HURT

MITCH CARDWELL

I've missed a few months worth of columns this year, so I'm gonna try to make up for it this month. Since we last spoke, I've had my entire world turned upside down by THE BLACK LIPS. Since the release of their first single, I've considered them to be one of the elite bands going today. As wowed as I was by all their previous output, *Let It Bloom*, their third studio LP and first for the illustrious In The Red label, has managed to eclipse everything that came before it. As their singles and previous LPs have shown, this is a band that is capable of writing classic psych-garage punk anthems. What was troublesome is that it seemed difficult for them to make an entire LP packed with the quality found in tunes like "Time Of The Scab" and "Freakout"…until now. *Let It Bloom* manages to make good on that promise, featuring 16 tracks of no-filler, neo-classic rock-'n'roll that sounds as innovative as it does timeless. They've moved past their astute studying of *Pebbles*, *Nuggets*, and *Back From The Grave* and onto something completely of their own invention. Their piss'n'bile drenched brand of psychedelica is front and center, yet the anger and desperation found on many of the tunes here is unmistakably punk. You will not be able to shake "Not A Problem" or "Dirty Hands" (the "Moulty" of 2005?) from your brain. *Let It Bloom* is a ridiculously great album and a mandatory listen when it comes time for your year-end best list.

While we're on The Black Lips' tip, I'd be a fool to not tip you off to their recent barrage of singles. Trust me, you'll want to hear more after ingesting *Let It Bloom*. First (and I might have already hipped you these) Slovenly Recordings managed to release two Black Lips 45s culled from the band's very first recording session in 2000. "Does She Want" b/w "Stoned" and "In & Out" b/w "Stuck In My Mind" both offer a glimpse at the band in their wild infancy. Flashing forward, Germany's Varmint Records released a 45 in celebration of their recent European tour. "Born To Be A Man" b/w "Hippys," essentially two *Let it Bloom* outtakes, features production and guest guitar insanity from KING KHAN! This one has been mighty hard to come by stateside. I haven't seen a distro that carries it and I ended up ordering mine direct from Germany. All three of these singles are limited to 500 copies total and each a worthy 7" companion to *Let It Bloom*. With the new LP, these three singles AND their under-the-radar *Live @ WFMU* LP on Dusty Medical (you remember that one, dontcha?), The Black Lips have managed to run away with 2005. All hail Flower Punk and The Death Cult!

For those keeping any sort of score, you might remember the first record I ever wrote about for *MRR* was by a band called FM KNIVES. When Icki passed the torch, it was the obvious starting point. I mean, c'mon…They were my favorite fucking band and their LP was atop nearly everyone's best-of lists. It was a sad day when they parted ways, but it was also inevitable that we'd hear more outta this lot eventually. The first new offering from these guys (excluding Chris Woodhouse's various recording projects) comes in the shape of LYME REGIS, a three-piece Sacramento band featuring Ed Carroll and Jason Patrone from FM Knives and Tristan Tozer of THE YAH-MOS. These three guys have been playing together for many years, most notably in THE PRETTY GIRLS, who released a 7" EP and a full length CD in their time together. As one would expect, their debut 7" EP on SmartGuy Records, *It Starts With The Band*, comes off sounding like a perfect middle ground between FM Knives and Pretty Girls. "USA" and "Suffer, Suffer" are as powerful and catchy as anything heard on *Useless And Modern*, while the title track and "Million Years" offer a Brit-influenced take on biting mid-tempo pop. I'm incredibly excited about this band (as you might've noticed) and for good reason. Please seek this 7" EP out immediately, as it's one of the year's essential singles.

Not content to drop one monster record at a time, SmartGuy has released a few other records worthy of your attention this time around. Perhaps the most anticipated of the entire lot is the sophomore album from CLOROX GIRLS, *This Dimension*. What can I say? Everyone loves Clorox Girls. Now with Colin of the late OBSERVERS in tow, Clorox Girls have kicked the infectious level up a notch with their new LP. Also on SmartGuy is the vinyl debut from Australia's SOVIET VALVES, the *Sight The Harms/Gaze That Harms* 7" EP. As huge fan of Australian punk, it's great to have another band to get excited about from down there. If you're in need of an intelligent and anthemic post-punk workout, I suggest you pick this single up pronto. Soviet Valves are definitely a band to watch out for in 2006.

P.Trash Records has quickly established itself as a collector's dream label. Month after month, they release records for highly-touted bands (both new and established) in limited pressings with *many* variations. It's a fool's paradise trying to keep up with everything (let alone scoring a copy of each variant!), but it's at least fun to try. The quality level of their releases has increased dramatically as the year draws to a close, and there are four releases in particular that caught my fancy in these late months. First up, the *Parts And Pieces* 7" EP by THE FEELERS. In case you don't remember, the band's debut 7" EP was my absolute favorite record of 2004 and their LP from earlier this year is sure to rear its manic head in many top tens. A lot of complaints have been issued in regards to the no-fi production on *Parts And Pieces*, but I don't hear the slightest thing wrong with it. This is a band that has yet to drop the ball when it comes to vinyl, and I whole-heartedly suggest you follow their every move closely. This one is limited to 500 copies, almost all of which are probably gone.

Proving that they are a label with their finger on the pulse of what's *really* goin' on, P.Trash has also issued a 12" EP by one of my favorite current bands, England's BLACK TIME. *New Vague Themes* is a true testament to P.Trash's aesthetic, not to mention a reaffirmation of how fantastic Black Time is. This one-sided 12" EP is limited to a scant 200 copies on heavy vinyl, all of which feature a hot-pink silk-screened B-side. The five tunes on side A are as blistering and ear-splitting as anything they've done previous. Speaking of which, it should be mentioned that In The Red Records has issued their long out of print debut LP, *Blackout*, on CD! If you missed the boat the first time around, I demand you pick this up. It was the biggest surprise jolt I got last year, that's for sure. Black Time also has a new 7" EP, *I Hate The World And The World Hates Me*, out of A Fistful Of Records. I say get 'em all and avoid the headaches.

The next P.Trash release of note ties into what has become a tradition for "Let's Get Hurt": A JAY REATARD update! In celebration of their recent European tour, P.Trash released the *Crowds* 7" EP by ANGRY ANGLES, the new band featuring Jay and Alix of THE LIDS and Shattered Records fame. It's hard to not get excited by any project involving these two, but I must say that Angry Angles have the potential to be one of the very best bands going today. It's easily Jay's best showing of late outside of THE FINAL SOLUTIONS and a much needed kick in the ass to those who think that all he is a bottle-breaking, synth-stroking maniac. Angry Angles are a straightforward, powerful punk rock band in the truest sense. I saw them twice last month and was absolutely floored. Be sure to pick up anything with Angry Angles' name on it, including their debut 7" EP on Shattered, this new P.Trash single and, last but not least, Ken Rock Records' *Totally SHATTERED Euro Tour* 7" EP, featuring exclusive tunes from Angry Angles, REATARDS, and TOKYO ELECTRON! We're awful lucky that this camp is as prolific as they are great. As long as they're releasing records regularly, I'm a happy guy.

P.Trash's most anticipated album release thus far has got to be the debut LP from JEFFREY NOVAK ONE MAN BAND. In an increasingly crowded one-man-band market, I've come to find that Jeff Novak and MARK SULTAN are the only two OMB's worthy of your scratch every time. Although Jeff has released a whole slew of singles and very limited CD-Rs, the *Southern Trash* LP stands head and shoulders above his previous output, making it easily one of my favorite LPs of the year. I'm hesitant to make the one-man-REATARDS claim again, but it's unavoidable. *Southern Trash* features all the frustration and fury of *Teenage Hate*, except it's only one *very* disturbed guy torturing you.

Those curious to hear how Mr. Novak might come across with a full band need look no further than the killer new single by RAT TRAPS, the *Tennessee Rock'N'Roll* 7" EP on Your Permanent Records. All three tunes here fall in line with the vicious sound we've come to expect from all the Southern bands currently kicking ass. It's catchy, but mean and desperate enough to have you breaking more than a few bottles. A no-brainer top ten record, and another single should appear on Shattered Records in the next month. One of the best new bands of 2005!

It's been far too long since I had the pleasure of dishing a new KILL-A-WATTS record. You know, that Wisconsin band that released a couple great LPs on Rip Off and a whole slew of killer singles? The reason why is that they broke up awhile back. Now, Ryan (guitar/vox) and Mechadrum (drums, duh) have joined forces with 1-D (aka Wendy from THE LOOKERS and *What We Do Is Secret)* to form MONITORS, a new "future punk" band. They retain the same breakneck catchiness of Kill-A-Watts, but replace the driving guitars with out-of-this-world keys and synths. Punks going synth crazy isn't exactly uncommon, especially lately with the success of bands like LOST SOUNDS. Monitors' take on this is refreshing, however, in that Ryan's songwriting focus hasn't changed, just the instruments used to deliver it. They don't take themselves too seriously (a fault more than a few recent synthpunk bands have fallen prey to) and there are short, catchy bursts that retain the split male/female vox, fun and attitude of Kill-A-Watts. The guitar crunch as simply been replaced with synth dementia. Your first taste of this great new band comes in the form of two debut 7" EPs, *Electric Knife* on Fungus Boy Records (500 copies total, with 200 on green vinyl!) and *Rotten Body Cleanup Crew* on Goodbye Boozy (300 copies, all black). Hopefully there are many more records to follow.

Goodbye Boozy has also released a single from what appears to be a one-off band called THE MILKY WAYS. This band features members of LES SEXAREENOS and DEL GATORS teamed with Roy Oden of MC MONKEY AND APE WITH ATTITUDE, EVOLUTIONS and LAST SONS OF KRYPTON. I had heard many tales of this pairing, but didn't think it would ever see the light of day. Thankfully, Goodbye Boozy rescued it and set it free. Taking the parties involved into account, I'm sure you'll be able to decide whether or not this something you'll need to hear. I'm all over it, if that helps you out any.

Another great return of a familiar face comes with the resurrection of Chicago's Sack O' Shit Records. Surely you remember their obscure killers from the likes of THE GUILTY PLEASURES, BRIDES, SMUTS, and countless others. Well, they're back in a big way with three new singles. The first single outta the gate comes from the incredibly demented HAIRCUTS, whose debut 45, "Haircuts Are No Fun" b/w "Never See Her Again" comes packaged with a ton of real hair. Disgusting, but the record rules (see review this issue). Next up is the debut single from Italy's BAD NEWS, the *Cops Are Coming* 7"EP. Bad Times play pretty standard Euro-garage, showing a heavy influence from the likes of OBLIVIANS and other primitive greats. Finally, and most comically, is the debut vinyl offering from CUNTPUPPET, *Ann Heizer's Bush 7"*. Where the fuck could I possibly begin with Cuntpuppet? I had the pleasure/misfortune to see these guys live at last year's Chicago Blackout and their set was one the most talked about moments of the entire weekend. Essentially, Cuntpuppet (who may or may not contain members of the Sack O' Shit front office) are a band dedicated to NASCAR, cheap beer, metal, and scoring trim. It's a cartoon-come-to-life manifestation of virtually every head banging, white trash stereotype known to man. What's scary is that the guys come across so authentically in their roles that the line between joke and reality gets blurred very quickly. The two songs on this 45, "First Comes The Beer, Then Comes The Bitches, Then We Have Sex All Night Long" b/w "Take Your Thumb Outta Your Mouth (And Suck On This)" both leave no middle ground. Either you're with them and think it's funny, or you're out for blood before the tune is over. Don't say I didn't warn you.

SNEAKY PINKS sent me a pleasant surprise in the mail not so long ago. Their self-released debut 7"EP (300 copies), *I Can't Wait*, is exactly the sort of thing that makes writing this column worthwhile. Featuring members of the great OKMONIKS, Sneaky Pinks are a fun, simplistic, and stooooopid punk rock band. If the moronic tactics of THE SPITS have yet to wear thin on your ears, give Sneaky Pinks a chance. It's the best single with a spray-painted aluminum foil sleeve that I own. This shit is getting ridiculous…

That's it for this year. I'm counting the minutes until 2006. I can't fucking wait to put 2005's dogshit behind me. Expect further rundowns of new bands like RAT TRAPS, LIVE FAST DIE, and TOP TEN in the next installment. Over and out…

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Have you noticed that our society has become more and more disposable? It used to be that much of our waste came in the form of packaging, both for products and food. Then it got to the point where products themselves became disposable. "One use" this thing, and "throwaway" that thing. We've gotten so used to convenience that we pay more money to have things already prepared, assembled, or ready for consumption. Pay no mind to the fact that we pay in many ways for these conveniences. Not only do we actually fork over the cash, but we also pay as trash lines our streets and city services work harder, as landfills get full and urban areas pay to haul the trash elsewhere. We pay for the damage to the environment, even if we don't individually foot the bill.

But it drives me crazy that we blindly accept all this crap that is spoon-fed to us and pumped into our way of thinking. Consumerism forces us to continue to buy into buying more. When something stops working we simply throw it away and buy another. OK, to be fair, we are not forced to do this. But indirectly we are, because products are not made to last and they are not made to be durable. We look for bargains and want to buy things cheap, because for the most part we are not looking to the future or to the durability of things lasting. And when we do, it often doesn't pay off anyway, because there is this constant upgrading and incompatibility being enforced at an ongoing pace. Whether we are looking at media formats, or electronical devices, there is no counting on the fact that that media card, or filter, or battery charger, or power belt will still be available when the one we are using ceases to work. And when we take the vacuum cleaner in to be repaired, we'll likely be told that the service fee will be twice what it cost new when we bought it and what it would cost to replace now. It's really absurd. So our basements, attics, garages, thrift stores, trashcans and landfills are overrun with outdated household items and electronics.

I have two old turntables in my closet. I have two old computer monitors, neither of which is great—one is huge and one is small. Erik's solution was to get me a new flat screen, one that would work well and take up less space, and I said, "There is no way I'm going to buy another monitor because the two I already have aren't quite right." I mean, I already have an old computer hard drive under my bed that I don't know what to do with, and I can clearly picture the two computer monitors in my family's house ditched after upgrades. Nope, I'm not going to further contribute to that. But it raises a larger question—what does happen to all these dead monitors? Or rather, what happens to all these perfectly good monitors that no one wants anymore? I mean, I think that the "disposable" camera phenomenon is a problem, but that is really just one of many things which we have too much of for the wrong reasons. Ever since they were introduced, I have wondered why people would spend $10 or more a pop, and then go on vacation buying five cameras or more when they could have purchased a decent camera that they could keep and reuse for the same price (or less.) Convenience is usually the answer. The disposable aspect appeals to people, who then don't fret if they lose the camera. But it was (is) their quality that always really got my goat. The computer monitors, hard drives, and cell phones are what really drive me crazy. It's bad enough that we don't know what to do with them when we replace them, but it's even more irksome to me that the technology advances at a pace that you cannot keep up with. Whatever you buy today is already obsolete or has at least been upgraded.

As our tech-no-logic-kill society continues to move at such a fast pace, leaving a trail of dead electronics in its path, does anyone stop to think what will really become of all the discarded stuff? Does anyone really believe that those disposable cameras will be reused? Well, some are, for budge film that takes even worse pictures. Toner cartridges are collected at place like Staples, and I think some places will take in used cell phones just like you used to be able to donate your old eyeglasses to charity groups that might pass them on to someone. We have disposable contact lenses now too. Come to think of it, what do we have that is not disposable and wasteful?

Well I'm hardly in a position to do anything about making techno-electronic products more durable, longer-lasting, or technologically sound. After all, there is a huge profit to be made from constantly upgrading, and as long as big business stands to make money, they will continue their practices. Look at cars and their shitty gas mileage. Until the recent gas price explosion and the public's outcry, what incentive has there really been for car manufacturers to do anything different? We want our phones smaller, our DVD players slimmer, and our TVs and monitors flatter and higher definition. And if we have it all wireless, too, perhaps run on solar batteries, maybe even talking to us and keeping track of streamlining our time—the more multitasking available the better, right? More, faster, now…after all.

At some point we all have to slow down a notch. The punks are notorious for not being so wasteful (or are they?) and for being resourceful and frugal, and for being creative and even for working towards sustainability, so perhaps we can actually make steps in our daily lives to make a difference. I know that I can start by not purchasing a new monitor for an old computer. And I don't need a smaller phone with more gadgets.

And I'm not going to be sold on the bigger size at the larger price, while we're at it. Take, for example, that small coffee that you used to be able to get for less than a dollar that is now called a tall and is twice the price. I think we can blame Starbucks for that, but even the indie coffee shops have copied that trend. Have you noticed that you rarely find small sizes available in fast food stuff at all? It's medium, large and extra large; or maybe biggie and great biggie. Word manipulation that makes you feel like you are getting more for your money, and in the process, they also manage to charge more for the smallest size than before. 16-ounce sodas now come in 20-ounce sizes that boast some percent for free, yet the prices are going up every time you make a stop in a convenience store. And what do we do? We fork over the cash, 'cause we'll pay for the convenience, and then we throw the trash away and forget about it.

Well, stop it. Don't fall for the double-speak, and stop buying into the waste. Sure, sometimes we need things on the go, and sometimes a fast convenience is worth the extra money or waste, but as a habit and a routine, it sucks. I feel helpless about what to do with an old vacuum cleaner that doesn't work anymore, just like an old radio tape player on the fritz. I can't bring myself to throw them away, but I don't use them 'cause they don't work right either. I can try to look for durable quality products when I'm in the need, but sometimes I feel like no matter what I do, nothing lasts the way I think it should, whether I use it hard and often or not. I don't know how my parents can still have the same vacuum cleaner they've had my entire life. But then again, I probably busted through over a dozen walkmans in high school, and it wasn't 'cause I dropped them or mistreated them. I just used them. So in a way, I'm used to the high turnover rate of "stuff," but it doesn't mean I don't want to scream about it every time I find that something doesn't work. I'm far from dazzled by new techno-gadgets and in fact, I not only want, but also expect things to work and last forever. In the meantime, I trudge along with duct tape and screwdriver and do what I can to make things work and last. Vacuum cleaners and computers should not be disposable.

I'm working too much these days, and seemingly stupid things frazzle me right now, like that vacuum cleaner belt breaking every time I use the damn thing—though being frustrated by wasteful lifestyles is hardly stupid. The autumn issue of *Slug & Lettuce* has been out for a month or so by now. If you want a copy of issue #85 send a 60¢ stamp for a copy in the U.S., $1 to Can./Mex. and $2 across the world. I've got benefit patches and some t-shirts and "the comp" should soon see the light of day. In the meantime, if you want to make a cash donation to help continue the newsprint publishing, that would be rad. The postage rates are supposed to be going up in 2006, so every extra bit helps.

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Judith Miller, the mousy Bush Administration propaganda mouthpiece forced to retire from *The New York Times*, is hardly an anomaly. American journalism is contaminated by widespread institutional corruption. Yet coming on the heels of the same paper's humiliation by phony reporter Jayson Blair and Stephen Glass's reign of error at *The New Republic*, the Miller mess's further contribution to the media's ever-diminishing credibility—the Gallup poll finds that 49 percent of Americans consider the news mostly or completely unreliable—has prompted industry insiders to propose cures so toothless that they only expose the cluelessness of those proposing them.

Miller, who cut-and-pasted the White House's Saddam-has-WMDs press releases into the *Times* to help build support for the invasion of Iraq, is being characterized as a rogue reporter by the same editors who encouraged and published her tripe. And the punditocracy is going along. She "should be promptly dismissed for crimes against journalism, and her own newspaper," Greg Mitchell wrote in the industry trade journal *Editor & Publisher*. "And Bill Keller, executive editor, who let her get away with it, owes readers, at the minimum, an apology." Slate.com media critic Jack Shafer, on the other hand, would settle for a mere "explanation."

The sad fact is that Miller and Blair, rather than being rare exceptions, reflect the endemic vices of elitism, unaccountability, and star worship that afflict our journalistic institutions, beginning with top management. It will take more than another pro forma mea culpa to rebuild their eroded credibility. Systemic changes are essential:

Journalists shouldn't get cozy with government officials. Shafer wrote in 2003: "[Judith] Miller grew incredibly close to numerous Iraqi sources, both named and anonymous, who gave her detailed interviews about Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction." A reporter's job is to discover and tell the truth. A politician's job is to lie. Like the giant squid and the sperm whale, politicians and reporters are natural enemies. With the exception of talking to whistleblowers, editors and producers ought to ban reporters from associating with high-ranking government and corporate officials outside the confines of a press conference or a formal interview situation. Press conferences produce lies, not news. What comes out of them should be treated as news only after it has been independently verified.

Journalists should be accessible. "Isolation impairs accountability," says Philip Seib, author of a book on reporting in the cyber era. An ivory tower mentality keeps news away. It's easier to track down Dick Cheney in his undisclosed location than to get your local news anchorperson on the phone. Too few newspapers and almost no broadcast outlets make it easy for their readers, listeners and viewers to contact their employees, whether to correct an error or suggest a story idea. Some newspaper websites don't even list their main phone number! Every newspaper by-line should carry its writer's direct phone number and email address, and they should be required to return their messages.

Reveal biases, even in feature pieces. The *New York Times Book Review* frequently assigns reviews to writers with a personal, philosophical, and political axe to grind against a the review's subject. Movie and music reviewers are similarly afflicted. Readers feel betrayed when they discover these biases elsewhere. If media outlets host a grudge match, they ought to own up to it at the top of the piece so readers can take the relevant history into account. Better still, don't assign pieces where there's a conflict of interest.

Stop hiring out of J-School. Only 10 percent of working print journalists hold a graduate degree in journalism, but this expensive diploma makes it easier for them to land a job at influential outfits like the *Times*. Journalism school graduates are likelier to come from wealthy families, have less work experience in other fields, and identify with powerful elites. J-Schools contribute to the lack of racial and class diversity in newsrooms, which remain 86 percent white—further separating them from their communities.

Ban patriotism. While I was covering the war in Afghanistan in 2001, a colleague from a major U.S. paper informed me: "We've captured Kunduz!" We? Never mind editorial independence—she identified with the Northern Alliance because they were backed by the United States. CNN mimicked Fox News's perpetually waving stars-and-stripes logo and TV anchors from Maine to Hawaii sported flag lapel pins—a prop on state television in dictatorships. Even when the U.S. is at war, reporters should remain neutral. Skeptics make better journalists than patriots.

Embedded reporters are whores. If Judy Miller got too close to Ahmed Chalabi, she had nothing on the hundreds of ersatz journalists who rode into Iraq in American tanks and armored personnel carriers. "When the only safety for a reporter is being embedded with the U.S. military, the reported stories tend to have a positive spin," Steve Weissman dryly observed. Reporters under military control invariably become subject to the Stockholm Syndrome. Reporters playing soldier sacrifice the popular goodwill that comes from being perceived as unbiased and thus increase the risk of attacks—such as beheadings in Iraq—against their peers. When I couldn't find a media outlet willing to send me to the 2003 invasion of Iraq as an independent, I refused to go. Correspondents who participate in a story—a war, say—deserve to be fired.

Be suspicious of showboats. Lucky and well-connected reporters should always raise red flags. Stephen Glass's editors loved him because he always turned in amazing stories—about a Wall Street shrine to Alan Greenspan, for example, or orgies of Young Republicans. Jayson Blair *always* seemed to be at the right place at the right time when he was actually hanging out at his apartment; Judith Miller ingratiated herself to her bosses with her high-level contacts (liars) in the White House. In the real world, lucky breaks and reliable sources are few and far between. As one of my first editors told my disconsolate self when I returned empty-handed from an assignment, "Write the truth. They refused to talk to you. So what? That's a story too."

Ted Rall, PO Box 1134, New York NY 10027. Email is: chet@rall.com. Website: www.rall.com Current Books: Wake Up, You're Liberal! How We Can Take America Back From The Right (Soft Skull Press, 336 pages, $14.95), is out now, available everywhere. Generalissimo El Busho: Essays And Cartoons On The Bush Years (NBM Publishing, 208 pages, $19.95 hardback/$15.95 paperback) is also out. The speaking tour is over, but if you're at a high school or college with a budget for bringing in speakers, I'd be happy to come to your city.

Allan McNaughton

It's midnight and the tea's on the go. Tetley British Blend (the round bags) one sugar and a splash of Vitasoy, ta! As I write this it's the start of December but I know it's going to be the new year before any of you read it, so I'm trying to think of what I'd want to say to you at the start of the year, even though I'm still in 2005 mode.

I began 2005 at a party in Glasgow. The party was in a bar/restaurant that's been around in one incarnation or another for many years, and has been a backbone of the music scene the whole time. I went to the party with my wife and a couple of old friends but I also ran into a bunch of people I used to be fairly close with but had lost touch with over the years. The party was crowded and a little bit boring, even though my friends' band played, but it was good to reconnect with some people I shared fun memories with. One acquaintance that happens to sing in an extremely famous band was there and he was asked about his New Year's Eve in the morning paper. My wee brother thought it was impressive that even in our advanced years we were still cool enough to be at a party that was mentioned in *The Sun* the next day. It hadn't really felt that glamorous at the time but I don't suppose the parties that get written about in the papers probably ever do.

I thought of that particular venue because I found myself back there again in October. (You know, the trip where I broke my elbow. By the way, thanks for all the get-well-soon messages that flooded my MRR mailbox after that—*not!* And I thought you cared…) The occasion was John Peel Day, a national day of mourning the loss of the world's greatest broadcaster a year earlier, and a celebration of his legacy. BBC Radio and MTV (UK) dedicated the day to Peel, playing songs and videos associated with him all day. I saw many videos on MTV that day that I didn't know existed, videos that probably have never been aired and probably will never be aired again, except maybe next John Peel Day… CAPTAIN BEEFHEART, CAN, THE FALL, THE WEDDING PRESENT, to name just a few. It was pretty surreal to sit there and see video after video of bands you didn't realize actually even *made* videos. Some really low-budget stuff, but still miles better than the five videos they still show on MTV these days. It gave you an idea of what music television could actually be like if it wasn't just a twenty-four hour commercial for the most generic, commercial, soul-destroying aspects of mainstream "culture" imaginable.

Anyway, I digress. Just about every music venue in the country was promoting a special John Peel tribute night. The one I went to featured some non-MRR-approved bands, but they're bands I quite like anyway. It was especially thrilling to see MOGWAI play to less than 200 people, since they normally play stadiums and the like now, I think. I'd never seen them live and probably never will again. Though I'm not a huge fan, I like their music OK, but they have this one song called "Christmas Steps" that just crushes. It follows the quiet-loud template of most of their stuff, but for some reason it stands out for me. I first heard it on a mix CD that my cousin made for me and I'd say it's now one of my all-time favorite songs by any band. Luckily they played it that night, which is why I now no longer need to ever see them again. That particular Peel Day party was broadcast live on Radio 1, so my wee brother could sit at home and listen, and marvel that his ancient older brother is cool enough to be at a party that's on the radio. Again, it didn't feel that glamorous, especially since I had my arm in a cast and sling.

It was a bit odd to see the mainstream media of the UK embracing all things Peel for a day, especially since most of those outlets seem to spend the other 364 days of the year actively trying to suppress anything that doesn't fit the mainstream model of ambition and success. Even then, most of them missed the point by trying to define Peel in their terms—claiming that his importance stemmed from all the successful bands and artists that he "discovered," from PINK FLOYD, TYRANNOSAURUS REX, and DAVID BOWIE to THE SEX PISTOLS, NIRVANA, and THE WHITE STRIPES. Journalists tripped over each other to prove how cool and with-it they were, and betrayed their age when they let us know just exactly when they'd been turned on to their favorite band by Peel late in the night, almost without fail tuned in on a little transistor radio under the bedclothes. I'd bet none of these wankers (speaking of late-night under-the-bedclothes activities) had listened to John Peel since they'd got out of college, and they probably now think that COLDPLAY is the cutting edge of underground rock. There was no mention of the fact that Peel had told his friend and BBC Radio colleague Andy Kershaw that he felt marginalized and underappreciated at the BBC after they'd moved his show from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. The sycophantic backslapping and self-congratulation that marked John Peel Day only served to make it even more apparent that the void left by his death will never be filled.

The last day of my trip home was spent walking around Glasgow with an old friend with whom I am, thankfully, in fairly regular contact with. (Recent conversations with this friend had prompted the column on violence I submitted a couple of months ago.) Our walk took in, among other things, an abandoned, derelict Charles Rennie Macintosh building hidden down an alley slap bang in the center of town, and the monument to the soldiers of the Spanish Civil War down by the river that I'd walked and ridden my bike past many times over the years but hadn't realized was there. The subject of violence came up again as we contemplated the monument. We agreed that there could be different kinds of violence, that the violence of an imperialistic crusade on foreign soil wasn't necessarily the same as a violent reaction to oppression, and this set my mind at ease a little on the questions that had been plaguing me.

My friend, a native of Glasgow, had recently moved back there after a few years away, and was trying to adjust to the changing city while at the same time trying to avoid falling into the rut of slipping back into the same patterns and routines that he was getting away from when he left. Looking at the city for a moment through his eyes emphasized the changes that had occurred since *I'd* been gone. I had to rethink my opinion of the place and the homesickness that is always at the back of my mind, tugging at me to return one day. It's a fact that I subconsciously deny, that the Glasgow I left twelve years ago is actually no longer there. There's still plenty of exciting stuff to discover, like ignored architectural gems down forgotten alleyways, but for how long?

Despite any inference to the contrary, I'm not leaving the Bay Area any time soon, so don't be scared to send that mail to PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609, USA. Wherever I happen to be, I can still receive your emails to allan@dropout.cc.

P.S. Don't think for a minute that you've heard the last of me going on about John Peel. His autobiography, *Mangrove Of The Marshes,* was released recently. He died before he could complete it, but his wife finished the job. I anticipate receiving this for Christmas, and no doubt will want to share my reading experience with you, my kind and gentle readers.

Zombie Picnic
elliott lange

December Zombie Picnic

A lot of records have been piling up around my stereo lately, so without further delay I'll try to get a few words said about most of 'em.

First things first, though, in keeping with the festive holiday cheer—if by the time this issue sees print (unfortunately a week or so after the fact) you haven't had enough of Christmas and all its bullshit, then you'll definitely want to pick up the Christmas album of the year, BATHTUB SHITTER's own *Bathtub Shitter Xmas*. A brief 3-song 3" CDEP (Tumult Records, www.tumult.net), *B.S. Xmas* has typically brilliant artwork and such soon to be yuletide classics as "Brown Santa," "Holy Shit," and their version of "Little Drummer Boy." I've only heard bits and pieces, but that which I have heard is as good as we've come to expect from this fecal-obsessed Japanese grind squad. If ever there were a band you'd want to see caroling on your porch, these guys top the list.

After THIRD DEGREE's great *Outstay* album, Poland's Selfmadegod Records (www.selfmadegod.com) fires back with the simultaneous release of three of the better grind releases this year, starting with the second full-length from Denver's CATHETER, *Dimension 303*. I thought it'd be pretty tough to top 2003's superb *Preamble to Oblivion,* their debut full-length, especially with some shaky line-up changes and a few spotty releases in between. But man, are they back in force. Everything about this record is executed flawlessly—there's so much intensity boiling over on each track, it's damn near impossible to sit still listening to this. Heraldo's drumming is simply devastating—the guy just never stops blasting and the transitions are seamless. Best of all, the 303 crew just write great songs—completely eschewing the Relapse tech angle, these guys write catchy and memorable tunes in the classic old-school *Enslavement*-era NAPALM DEATH vein, but turned up a notch or ten. The production on this is absolutely perfect too—perfect mix of rawness with clarity and heaviness. Definitely a serious contender for grind album of the year.

Next up are Warsaw's own tech-grinders, ANTIGAMA. Hard to believe these guys are already on their third full-length, *Zeroland*. I remember not too long ago getting excited about discovering this "new" band's amazing debut *Intellect Made Us Blind* in 2002. These guys just get better, tighter, and faster with each release, and *Zeroland* is no exception. They've really picked things up in the speed department (not that they were ever slow), but they still retain plenty of their noisy jagged atmospherics, sounding not unlike DISCORDANCE AXIS channeling *Need to Control*-era BRUTAL TRUTH with a healthy GODFLESH influence to boot. Always original, always devastating, ANTIGAMA remain one of the more underrated bands out there.

Finally, there's *Sedimente* from Germany's WOJCZECH. I have to admit to not being much of a fan of their earlier work, so I was pleasantly blown away with this, their first proper full-length after a dozen or so EPs. They basically completely changed their sound, going from a noisy sloppy generic sound to the huge sound found here. The better production certainly helps, but the playing speaks for itself—the drumming is immediately tighter and faster, and the guitars—well let's say they've succeeded in creating *melodic* grind, and being the last person in the world that would want to hear that, I can tell you the results are awesome—it's melodic in the way that NASUM and HIS HERO IS GONE can be. The only down side is that the album's a bit lopsided. The first couple tracks are so good, it's obvious they stuck the strongest material up front and the b-side is comparatively forgettable. Still, well worth it and a very welcome progression.

A couple demos have been piling up around here as well, the most neglected of which is the killer 6-song *Shitlife* EP from the sublimely named GOD$ DICK. A trio from Boca Raton, Florida playing a chaotic blend of grinding power violence with utterly manic drumming and dizzying time changes, their style's pretty hard to nail down—a good mix of metal and punk with the weirdness of SOCIETY OF FRIENDS and even some West Bay stylings ala SPAZZ and NO LESS, especially in the vocal department. Definitely one of the better demos I've heard of late. Labels, get these guys on a seven-inch (mikepineyro@yahoo.com).

From parts farther removed—the island of Java in Indonesia to be exact—the good folks in MRxGRIND sent over their 8-song *Grindemo 2005*. It's a rather raw, unpolished affair but given the source, that's hardly surprising. Their brand of metallic grind is pretty mean and ugly, like a rougher Neanderthal version of old ASSÜCK—but maybe I'm just saying that because of the "ass-sucking" porno sample on "Rekontruksi Penis & Vagina." I'm also reminded of several of their cohorts in the Malaysian/Singaporean scene like PARKINSON and EYESORE and the other bands on the *Eastern Grind Unleashed* comp, though perhaps that's just geographical prejudice on my part. Nothing Mozart couldn't have written, but still a pretty promising and evil-sounding release—I definitely look forward to hearing more in the future (mrxgrind@yahoo.com).

Mr. Grind from MRxGRIND (haven't gotten another name outta him) also sent along the discography CD from Houston's MACHINE GUN ROMANTICS, *Everything So Far* which he co-released along with Dangerously Small and 625 on his own Time Up Records for release in Asia (t1meup_recs@yahoo.it). Here you get the 7", the '04 tour-only cd-r, their '03 demo and a live set including an INFEST cover. This is textbook high-energy thrashing power-violence—the sort that you'd expect from a 625 release, with all but two songs clocking in under the minute mark. The scrawny little toothpick they got singing manages some pretty high-register screeching yelps, and the rhythm section's got some serious sideburn action happening, the power of which they obviously draw from for the tightness of their playing.

Last I heard, MGR had broken up, which would be too bad if one of the bands they subsequently formed wasn't the fucking monster that is INSECT WARFARE, whose 7" on 625 *At War with Grindcore* I reviewed last issue. Well worth another mention—if you read this column regularly and you haven't checked out this bulldozing eight-song EP of insanely heavy no-frills old-school grind, you'll definitely be wanting to. I'll just relate this lovely bit from their thanks list to give an idea of their sound, "Thanks: …all of our friends, and Earache Records catalogue numbers 6, 8, 13, 16 and 21 for being in our collections." Dammit, I'm missing *Realm of Chaos* in mine…

Speaking of the early Earache catalog, I wrote an essay in last month's reviews section about how great it was that someone finally bootlegged the first O.L.D. album on CD. Despite some retarded liner notes and the idiotic inclusion of a live EXTREME NOISE TERROR set at the end of the disc, the bootlegger in question actually did a great job with this release with perfect sound and the inclusion of the split 7" with ASSÜCK from 1990 and even the '87 *Bathrooom's Rule* demo from the pre-O.L.D. incarnation, REGURGITATION. But the *Old Lady Drivers* full-length alone is what really stands out—Plotkin's guitar work is great, combining noisy grind with his trademark psychedelic experimentation. Plus the drumming's super fast and tight and Alan Dubin's inimitable cackle and lyrics make for some truly unique and memorable songs. Track this down if you can: Old Lady Drivers Records (yeah right), PO Box 6322, Huntington Beach, CA 92622-5221, USA.

Also from last issue, it's worth mentioning again the stellar new full-length from Montreal's MESRINE — *I Choose Murder*— on Crimes Against Humanity (www.cahrecords.com), which I've been listening to non-stop all month. The simplicity and relative unoriginality of the source material is testament to how good the record is 'cause these guys take the relatively derivative death/grind sound and just make stupidly catchy songs out of it. Drumming's great, guitaring's great, growling's great—these ugly motherfuckers deliver the goods.

A few more Relapse releases I received that I better hurry up and review before they get any older—there's the exhaustive AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED double-disc discography, *Bestial Machinery*. Compiling all pre-*Honky Reduction* material, this contains splits with BENUMB, CATTLEPRESS, ENEMY SOIL, GOB, LACERATION, the *ANb* demo, the self-titled Clean Plate EP, the *Glue that Binds* EP, plus assorted comp and unreleased stuff. After sitting through the full 80 minutes (133 tracks) of this, I came away with the same jittery teeth-grinding head full of hate that I used to get when the guitarist in my old band used to make me smoke speed with him. And I think that's just what Hull and his drum machine are going for. The only ANb release you'll really ever need.

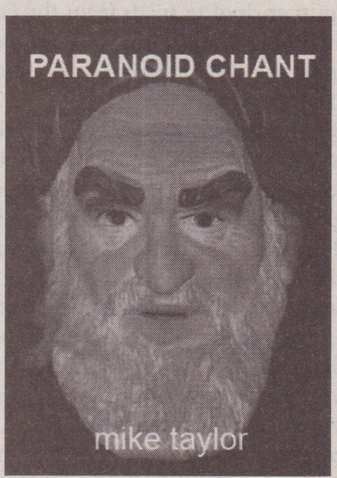
Also there's the dubious addition to the Relapse roster, BURIED INSIDE with their album *Chronoclast: Selected Essays on Time-Reckoning and Auto-Cannibalism*, a concept record about the evils of time itself as rationalized by this Canadian quintet. The sound they're going for mixes the slow plodding quiet to loud dynamics of ISIS mixed with the minor-key harmonies of their country's forbearers of moody emo, URANUS. For the first few tracks, they pull things off—good dynamics with some crushing breakdowns, particularly on fourth installment, "Time as Surrogate Religion." But on later tracks, these breakdown pay-offs are absent and the songs meander along to no conclusion, doing this annoying building upon building, constant crescendo thing that never leads to anything. For a band so morally opposed to time, they're remarkably good at playing in time (if these guys were serious about their chronoclastic agenda they'd play like a junior high band), but ultimately the overly serious drudgery gets stale and repetition sets in quickly.

Finally there's the latest from UNSANE, *Blood Run*. I never in my life thought I'd be giving a positive review to this undying New York trio, but after accepting that they're just not going to go away, I sat down and listened and actually liked what I heard. Still almost insultingly simple arrangements, but at least Chris Spencer and crew have pulled out some interesting and catchy riffs for a change, even with the occasional Southern swagger to some of the songs. Still can't see myself voluntarily listening to this much and can't understand why Relapse keeps em on the payroll, but for what it is, there're some good things to be found here.

Speaking of annoying tendencies, gotta talk some smack on the new HEWHOCORRUPTS EP, *The Smell of Money* (Eugenics, eugenicsrecordlabel.com). Once again a perfectly good record is ruined by, you guessed it—the singer. I know this guy thinks he's awful clever and wacky but he should keep his irony contained to the lyrics and METALLICA parodies. He's now adopted this unlistenable yee-haw twang to his vocals to really drive it home kids that he's WACKY! and CRAZY! and JUST DON'T CARE! and is subsequently in the process of rendering a once formidable grind outfit into a novelty act. The CD also features a scratch n sniff motif—*smell* of money, get it?—which is cool, but further underscores the novelty angle. Too bad, because the music here is killer as always.

Finally I'm gonna wrap things up with another record that's been out a while that I just got my hands on, the latest from San Francisco's finest purveyors of true metal, THE LORD WEIRD SLOUGH FEG. If you never thought you'd own a power metal album in your life, you might want to reconsider; *Atavism*, SLOUGH FEG's fifth full-length (Cruz del Sur, www.cruzdelsurmusic.com), is one of the most ridiculously catchy records I've heard in years with "Hiberno-Latin Invasion" and "Agony Slalom" in particular cementing themselves in my brain. Lead singer/guitarist Mike Scalzi (a name virtually mandating that he play in a metal band) is a bad ass- his lyrics, covering everything from evolution to *The Odyssey*, are intelligent and original, and the guitar work is relentless throughout. Plus he can actually sing without sounding like a German cornball. If you own any MAIDEN and you don't dig this record consider yourself officially outed: poseur.

That's all I have room for this month, keep the demos and whatever else coming to Elliott Lange, 1320 Fulton St., San Francisco, CA 94117, USA, cromlaughs@hotmail.com



PARANOID CHANT

mike taylor

Snow came to New England early this year, before Thanksgiving. To mitigate New England Gas's 17 percent rate hike, the Venezuelan government struck a deal with the state of Massachusetts to provide the economically disadvantaged with 12 million barrels of cut-rate heating oil through the Citgo corporation. Critics ballyhoo over what they perceive as a brazen affront to the Bush administration. And why not? I say, if you're gonna put gas in your car this holiday season, go the extra mile to Venezuela-owned Citgo. I'm sure they're wracking up human rights abuses behind a leaden curtain somewhere just out of sight, but I doubt you're running on veggie diesel just yet — which is easy to learn, as is simplifying to a bicycle/public transit lifestyle, but Americans hate change, I know…

The threat of a gesture of generosity: so much official ire has been raised against Hugo Chavez's meddling in our energy crisis that there is a team of independent contractors hired by the Department of Energy currently sawing Massachusetts off the mainland. What is this illustrating? A precedent acknowledging the inefficacy of our federal government? The I- Know-You-Know wink and nudge from outside forces that can see just how much inertia is accruing against the Bush administration? This is plain embarrassing. It's the red-faced parent and the anonymous basket of new clothes on the doorstep. A gesture to be applauded and reciprocated.

I know I don't need to tug too firmly at the collective understanding of MRR's readership that governments are historically just not looking out for the best interests of humans. Any state body that aims to make citizens of us before we hit the table is suspect at best. However, this is the world in which we live. Even *Green Anarchy** has to use the US Post Office. So what say we take a look at some possible outcomes springing forth from the current US backlash coming from south of the border (not the I-95 tourist trap, but that would be *hilarious*):

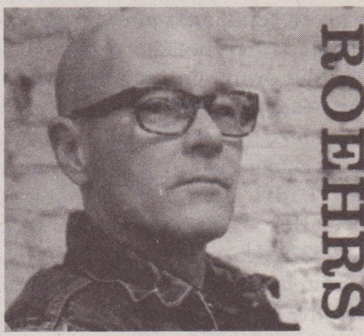
Indigenous coca farmer Evo Morales stands a pretty good chance at capturing the Bolivian presidency on December 18, though in MRR deadline land I'm placing myself in the immediate past compared to you, the reader; so if I'm wrong and he lost by a landslide, my apologies. The *New York Times* reported on Sunday, November 20, that the Bush administration talks a pretty heavy game in regard to this guy, straight up comparing him to Osama bin Laden. The reason may be that he's making the North/South PR error of repping hard for coca farmers. His, and most of his peers and countrymen's, contention is that they are cultivators of the leaf — they do not refine it into cocaine for indy rockers and art school lackeys: "neither cocaine nor drugs has ever been part of Andean culture." Fair enough. However, this assertion is no way to make friends with Yankee powermongers. Nor is making very public lovey eyes with Castro and Venezuela's Hugo Chavez. *Especially* when your country has considerable oil and hydrocarbon reserves (and is still the second poorest country in South America) and *especial-specially* when you've recently given very public props to Iran for their nuclear energy program.

But is making friends with the U.S. going to be so important for fledging politicians in "developing nations" in the 21st century? The answer is a resounding Maybe or Maybe Not — in the meantime, Morales knows to praise China's rapid economic growth in the press without making the old lefty error of romanticizing the Maoist era. The domino effect is something our government has proven they'll go to the board for. Ask any Nepalese prince about the possible wages of hedging one's bets against imperialist grudgefuckers. However, the Americas are not Nepal, not quaint, exotic possible allies. Bolivia is named for fucking Simon Bolivar; they're not fucking around down there. The Indian population of Aymaras and Quechas are more than half the population; it seems like it wouldn't take too much to get an indigenous Andean, which Morales is, into office and really start wedging against exploitative U.S. policies operating under the blanket of the drug war. Not that Bolivia, Argentina, and Venezuela currently comprise much of an economic bloc, but it's the threat of a good example that gets gears turning in Washington. And we should all follow Morales in the press, not only for further signs of encouraging development, but for cracks in the veneer — he's been accused of being on drug lords' payroll (some statistics state that up to 90 percent of coca production in Bolivia finds its way into the illegal drug trade, despite Morales's insistence of its cultural primacy). U.S. intelligence claims he's a Chavez puppet. The South American left is far from taken with him, accusing him of simply playing The Game, but that's what politicians do. Once again, the world in which we live.

But I guess that's all up for grabs at any time, right? That's why we're attracted to big, spectacular gestures, publicity stunts, and media spectacles. Douglas Rushkoff posits in his book *Media Virus* that simple coverage of a newsworthy event can sometimes thrust it into the realm of the spectacle, thereby replicating itself in variations worldwide. The suicide bomb illustration is the most obvious. There are, however, grand and humane examples of this kind of action possible. Venezuela is hopefully illustrating just that this winter by realizing the difference between a nation's people and a nation's *government*. We should take any chance, no matter how seemingly trite or cliché, to always assert that we *do not agree*. It's not enough to just hate the government, because it's not going anywhere with or without your opinion. I feel like I say a version of this in each column, but please consider the consequences. We can't just cruise, content in our dissatisfaction. Just as surely, there's not going to be 30 nights of rioting in any U.S. city anytime soon. Think and participate, or just admit you don't care.

Scenery #19 is out. It's available for $3 ppd from me at PO Box 28226, Providence, RI 02908.

*Speaking of, whoever signed me up for a subscription must know that I'm not anti-civilization or even remotely interested in "rewilding" myself, so *please* save the trees in which you live and take me off your mailing list!



Still the Enemy

Those Boston punk rock stalwarts, TOMMY AND THE TERRORS, have a raging new CD out on TKO Records. The new material is entitled *Unleash the Fury* and this fucker kicks a whole bunch of skinhead/punk butt! For many years, these guys have combined punk rock hooks with intelligent lyrics and street credibility. It speaks well for any band that can produce a CD this cohesive after so many years on the road. One song that jumps up in your face is "Still the Enemy." Read this shit: "The cops are still the enemy / The suits are still the enemy / The schools are still the enemy / Their rules are still the enemy / Somewhere we lost our hate / Became part of the state / Part of the status quo / Someone I don't know / Your world, my enemy / You're still my enemy / The state is still the enemy / Alarm clocks are still the enemy / The mall is still the enemy / TV is still the enemy / Somewhere we lost our hate / Became part of the state / Part of the status quo / Someone I don't know / The White House is still the enemy / UPC's still the enemy / Commercials still the enemy / Your world my enemy / You're still my enemy / So fulfilled to masturbate / Accepting the things that we hate / And the hostages still don't see too comfortable to be angry / Your world my enemy / You're still my enemy." Yes! Fucking brutal!

TOMMY AND THE TERRORS rip through "Here We Go," "The Gorilla Song," "All Together," "I'm Coming Home," "I, Barcode," and then get to a brilliant fucking song, "Get Away." Excellent! This CD continues to clobber you right through "Death to You" and then you get to an intense commentary on the scene. Check out the lyrics on "Worms": "Is this still underground? / Have we lost our souls and sound? / The apple will destroy the tree / No more family / Are these still songs of rebellion if corporations sell them? / An easy fake with shake n' bake / It's got no meaning / Can we stick together / Can we beat them back / Is that what we are / Or is it just an act / Is there still an outside if we're all in? / It's not ours if it comes from them / Are these still songs of rebellion if no one's there to yell them? / Diluted / Polluted / It's got no meaning / Can we stick together / Can we beat them back / is this what we are / Or is it just an act? / This still the underground / We will never lose the sound / The apple won't destroy the tree / It's our family / These are our songs of rebellion / They're ours you can't sell them / Never give in / Never give in / There's too much meaning / Can we stick together / Can we beat them back / Is this what we are / Or is it just an act / No they can't take it / only we can give it up / They'll try to fake it / That will never be enough / No they can't take it / We will never give it up / They'll try to fake it / That'll never be enough." Very good!!

TOMMY AND THE TERRORS polishes you off with "Avoid the Noid!" This record rocks your world and makes you think—what a novel combination! Job well done, TOMMY AND THE TERRORS! Well done TKO Records!

Greg and THE BOILS from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania have a fistful of melodic Oi! and streetpunk ready for you cretins! TKO Records has released THE BOILS twenty-five song opus *From the Bleachers* for your holiday entertainment! This massive output crosses over several different genres from DROPKICK MURPHYS-style street rock to BODIES style melodic punk, to energetic hardcore action! Greg and THE BOILS have been playing punk rock for so long that an entire generation of punks has come up listening to them!

On the *From The Bleachers* CD THE BOILS rip through a myriad of interesting songs, many with lyrics that stimulate and with music that entertains. Some of the songs you get are: "Blood on the Fields," "A Far Cry from Extinction," "Into the Enemy," "Bed of Whiskey," "The Cogs will Turn," and "Anarchy in Action." Read the words to this rocker: "Cardboard signs, bottles on the ground as you walk by, you hear the sound / Of punks pawning off punks what an insult, you should be smacked with your studded belt / A cartoon version of homelessness, a cartoon of poverty / A cartoon character playing pretend, like a child actor / there are endless people — who need it more than you / Endless fucking people struggle through and through / Punk is dead, punk's alive who really give a fuck / The ultimate insult punks pawning off of other punks / Is it anarchy in action? Are you really that detached? / From the poverty excelling, the wars they are propelling / To think you're anything but a parody / think twice before you come crawling to me / Think three times before you go crossing the line / Think twice before you come crawling to me / Think twice before you cross me." Fuck yes!

THE BOILS chug through "Slit Your Throat," "Declaration of War," and get to "Valley of Death." This song is another tasty chunk of THE BOILS' patented melodic punk with good lyrics. Read on: "How many times have we seen a clusterfuck of enemies / On a deadly rampage, through the years of history / And now the same old story is told again, faith vs. faith, man vs. man / Into battle banging out bullets from another round / Religious martyrs blowing children and themselves to pieces / Back home soldiers sent to war on a suicide mission by a president who duped us all / Into the valley of death — to the end of the world, to the end of the world we go / Into the valley of death to the end of the world, to the end of the world we go / Shock and awe, dead bodies stacked, of American soldiers and the fallen enemy / Profit margins CEO's while the poverty stricken, into the carnage go / A clusterfuck of enemies, A clusterfuck of enemies / A nightmare of death and deceit / History repeats the truth…God failed you." Hell yes!

THE BOILS continue to rock on through "In the Scope of the Hunter," "Teach Arrives," "Skinhead Reggae Beach Stomp," and finish you off with "Philly Shreds." This is a good CD! For your copy of *From the Bleachers* write TKO today!

TKO Records is also proud to present the long-awaited COCK SPARRER DVD *What You See Is What You Get*. This two-years-in-the-making labor-of-love is edited by Belgian filmmaker Pollet Yannick. The two DVD package includes the 2003 Morecambe, England COCK SPARRER show and the USA 2000 COCK SPARRER tour from Boston, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Included is a music video from the 70s of "We Love You" (the amazing Stones cover) with Colin McFaull in "clockwork" attire and complete make-up! You also get footage from the European COCK SPARRER tours 1994-1996. There is fucking classic material here! This DVD is a must for all COCK SPARRER fans—no—it's a must for all punks and skins as a historical document of one of the most influential bands in the punk and Oi! world!

Get your TKO product from 8941 Atlanta Ave. #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646; www.tkorecords.com.

KYRE & DUUNARIT from Finland have got a fucking outrageous dose of dangerous rock and roll for you fucks! This perverse skinhead EP has nine socially unacceptable songs that are both melodic and threatening! Since this is sung in Finnish with lyrics printed in Finnish, American skins will have to just fucking go along with it. The gruff vocals combined with the brutal guitar/bass/drum assault will have you tapping your boot on the bar-rail.. The enthusiasm is quite clear. These fuckers actually know how to play their instruments! Fucking great! Contact Hell's Tone Records for your copy of this Oi!/skinhead rock 'n' roll gem!

Fuck yes! You surly fucks should check out PKDORES from Chicago, Illinois this month. These Spanish-speaking skins and punks, with some members formerly of YOUTH AGAINST deliver a finely honed four-song punk and Oi! EP for you on Intoxicado Records.

This EP is called *!Kriticado!* and the men involved crank out journeyman punk/skin rhythms for your listening pleasure! All the individuals involved are accomplished musicians—this is not a project just thrown together. The pride this band feels and the emotion they convey is evident even to us non-Spanish-speaking listeners.

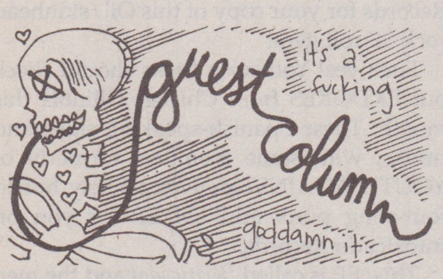
The overall feel of the EP is passionate punk with great sing-a-long choruses and even some horn playing thrown in for good measure! This is a very good record! Write to Intoxicado Records at PO Box 220342, Chicago, IL 60622; www.pkdores.com.

FIRST OFFENSE has a screaming good EP ready for you fucks! These skinheads and punks from Akron, Ohio come storming into your house with their *Stranded In the Combat Zone* EP on Step Up! Records. These rough and ready fellows play street rock with authority, not unlike the mighty BRUISERS. The FIRST OFFENSE *Stranded In the Combat Zone*, starts off with a melodic rocker, "Sinking Ship." then you get "Dirty Americans" and the momentum carries right through to side two.

A really strong song leads off side two: "Courage in the Crowd," This song shows that these skins and punks have compassion for people less fortunate than themselves. Read the words to this one: "Gave your last five bucks and a blanket to a kid worse off than you / Tonight yer cold and hungry but at least you know you're true / There's a fire burning that's gonna fight away the cold / That fire rages hot deep inside your soul / Courage in the crowd / Stand up tall / Above them all / You'll never fall / There's a fight tonight and this might be the end / Ya look behind you're back but you don't see your friends / Tonight might be the night that you grow dead and cold / Just pray the word gets out you fought to save your soul."

Yes! Good song! Song four wraps this solid EP up with "Downtown at Dawn." HUDSON FALCON'S fans will appreciate this tuneful street noise from the Midwest-heartland of the United States of America. Contact Step-Up Records at www.streetanthemrecords.com.

Until next month, see you fucks at the bar!



After a Decade of Standing Still, the Zapatistas Take a Step

by Craig Cox

Anyone who believes in a communal form of lifestyle bereft of the individualized, gain-obsessed notions of capitalism, or anyone who really gives a shit about the sorry state the worlds in, should hear all the news regarding the Zapatistas and the EZLN. On June 19th the General Command of the Zapatista Army (CCRI-CG) issued a statement, signed by Subcomandante Marcos, which declared a "general red alert". The statement went on to state the closure of government offices in Zapatista communities. All former Zapatista government officers were called on to evacuate so they could carry out their duties in a "clandestine and nomadic manner." They urged anyone working in peace societies or community projects to leave rebel areas or stay at their own risk. They called any EZLN members involved in Zapatista projects to flee and cancelled broadcasts from Radio Insurgente (their rebel station). They also declared that any future actions carried out by the Zapatistas were in no way connected to their former allies.

Naturally, this caused a flurry of speculation as to what the EZLN's plans were. A lot assumed that it meant the Zapatistas would return to a more confrontational role and indulge in military tactics for the first time in eleven years. Conversely, much speculation followed as to the actual achievements of the EZLN's efforts in the Chiapas. As it turns out, the Zapatistas were already thinking hard about what achievements they have made and were calling all members back for discussion on a new direction for the EZLN and the Chiapan effort.

Since the end of the peace talks in '95 and the signing of the San Andreas accord it has been the Zapatistas who've kept to the agreed cease-fire, and the Mexican police force that have repeatedly broken it. The repeated evictions of indigenous people from their land and assassinations of dissenting Chiapan voices by Mexican authorities have been widely reported in the ten years since the peace talks, and yet in all that time the Zapatistas have refused to return to the use of violent methods in retaliation. They have openly stated that their initial violent uprising in 1994 was an unfortunate necessity, carried out in order to gain some kind of foothold. Since taking control of Chiapas in Southern Mexico, the Zapatistas and, more specifically, the organizations the community established (the EZLN and FZLN) worked hard to put a true, equality-based political system in place in the region, controlled from the bottom up with as little power placed in the hands of government authorities (no vanguard party). All decisions were made with the full consideration of all peoples affected, resulting in a widespread system of communication through which the people and communities discuss matters. It was, in fact, primarily the decision of the people for the Zapatistas to rise up in the first place.

From the 2001 to 2004, the EZLN issued a series of eight communiques. Their main point of interest was the description of the decision-making system in place within Chiapas. All positions of community representation are rotated at a near constant pace. They say that with this method, all members of the community will learn the inner-workings of their system and there is nearly no possibility for corruption. The EZLN placed their primary concerns on the health and education of the indigenous people in Chiapas. They set up many free clinics, a few hospitals and instituted programs to teach certain members of communities basic medical knowledge. Also, the Zapatistas have been huge supporters of an upsurge in interaction between those who fight against neo-liberal ideas around the world, saying that we should all cooperate in order to achieve some kind of result.

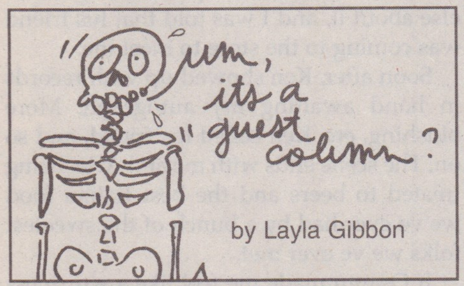
For the most part, however, the EZLN and their sister political organization, the FZLN, never declared an anti-capitalist stand point. Their main political effort was achieving representation within the current Mexican political machine and subverting the one-party system—as has been said, striving for a "nicer democracy." In the past, a point of contention with the principles of the EZLN has been the contradiction between their efforts to have control from the bottom up within their community and their willingness to try and find compromise with a capitalist political system they know to be corrupt.

Five days after the general red-alert, the EZLN calmed all concerns with the issuing of the "6th Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle." With the issuing of the 6th declaration, and the subsequent discontinuation of the FZLN, the EZLN has presented a concrete anti-capitalist standpoint. They have expressed their dissatisfaction with trying to work in a system that ignores them and with the ideological compromises within the FZLN and so have had it dissolved. They have also called on the support of all "left organizing groups" with an International Conference they have declared for June 6th, 2006. The EZLN stated that it intends to open itself out to the international anti-capitalist movement, to offer more solidarity and support then has been achieved in the past.

Where is this all leading the EZLN? In forums and chat rooms on the Internet it's being said widely that this concrete declaration of ideology has come from the disenchantment created by a dozen years of trying to reason with a system that doesn't care what they have to say. This is obviously a part of it, but why the sudden hard tone and stance? It couldn't just be dissatisfaction with the Mexican Government; this was the reason for the uprising in the first place. Since then, the government has become no less oppressive of the Chiapan cause. So what would make them assume that switching to hard-line anti-capitalism would help them when the system is still hard-line capitalist? Maybe they saw that compromise would never work so they switched to a stubbornness to match their oppressors'. Maybe they see truth in what's said about the anti-capitalist mind-set developing more and more throughout the world and becoming increasingly connected with itself, to the point where they see that their revolution in the mountains of Mexico isn't an isolated sentiment, it's one being expressed all over at all levels of volume. The very fact that they've announced an international conference for the first time in a decade seems to suggest this.

So is this an act of desperation? A stubborn return to their initial ideals spurred on by the new generation of Zapatistas moving into the organization, fed up with a 12-year stalemate, or is it a part of the presumed international push away from capitalism, away from neo-liberalism, toward actual freedom? Of course you can't say; you can only wait to know.

For updates on the EZLN and the June 6th conference go to anarkismo.net, zeztainternazional.org.mx or ezln.org.mx


"um, its a guest column?"

by Layla Gibbon

I wanted to write something about feminism and politics in punk, this is written in some vague attempt to start a 'dialogue'[1] on something that is really important to me. I keep feeling like I have to insert some kind of disclaimer here, I am sort of uncomfortable writing in this forum just because it feels so permanent, like *MRR* is the canon of punk rock and these words are now set in stone. Fuck it, right? This is more of a collection of random thoughts on said subjects, not a cohesive and conclusive dissertation on feminism in punk today. Anyway! Please respond.

As of recent times my friends have been subjected to epic conversations about the transition from End Racism[2] longsleeves and long instructional song intros about the plight of the downtrodden to messageboard cynicism and ironic dismissiveness in regards to anything that might implicate someone in the crime of giving a shit. It feels like the political culture in punk has gone from the 90s faux sincere personal is political feminist 4 fux to a general feeling of, "Hey we've achieved feminism now, let's talk about Lip Cream flexis!" Everything seems really static and codified. I don't mean that somehow in thee olden days everyone had a deep understanding of feminist issues and it was like a constant giant group hug at all times in safe spaces across America; maybe more like there seemed to be a willingness to confront uncomfortable issues. And I don't mean that those confrontations were always fruitful or beneficial, but at least people had to at least pretend they gave a shit somehow…It just feels like things have shifted towards the comfort of apathy, anything that makes anyone feel uncomfortable is ridiculed and dismissed.

The random instance that inspired all of this is actually one of the most irritating things about about being an active woman in the punk scene—when you are talking to someone at a show say and they don't bother to introduce you to their friends or maybe they don't acknowledge what you do. For example a dude will be given a title and background info upon introduction, "This is Scott Weed of Douche and the Fuckin Bags."[3] Whereas generally women's work in the scene is not acknowledged as being part of their punk identity. It seems really superficial perhaps, but when experienced on a constant basis it can make everything you do seem like meaningless background busywork.

Another random point is that I feel like a lot of cool punk girls have jumped ship for the comforts of indie rock/noise/whatever…and why is that? I think underground culture is way more fragmentary and separated out than it was before, and a lot of people (girls/women) see punk/hardcore as a monolithic, outdated form, rather than an idea they can own and use for their own purposes. I got into punk thru riot grrrl, via Huggy Bear in London, where I grew up. Riot grrrl was clearly contextualized within the punk movement, it was initially at least a spark of DIY spirit in a staid and boring scene. There was a distinct sense of taking things back, and of invigorating a staid and reactionary dude scene with ideas and sounds and words that genuinely freaked people out at least intially… before everything got codified and the rule book was written out and the sense of freedom and adventure dissipated in a flood of press attention and the dogmatics of expensive private school liberal artpeak. My question in regards to the after effects of that would be: how did feminism become knowing how to knit yr boyfriend a skull and crossbones scarf? I get so bored and depressed looking at magazines like *Bust* and *Venus*. Mainstream indie rock culture magazines, which obviously have their roots in riot grrl but seem to ultimately be about being a crafty entrepreneur and encouraging an alternative girl-culture based on consumption rather than liberation through ideas and sound. It's so frustrating how pedestrian and mundane feminist culture is right now in that sense. Emulating a crafty mom from a midwestern suburb in the 70s isn't why I got into punk. I understand the notion of DIY and making your own things, and how that could be perceived as an empowering buy-nothing stance but I don't feel like that is really what's at work. What do you think?

My last point is a little all over the place but here goes…I know that the Internet has revolutionized punk in many good and decent ways; for instance I love the fact that I can now find out in about five seconds all I ever needed to know about The Proletariat. I used to have to weasel info from random reluctant to share dudes about that kind of thing in the pre-information age, when I discovered that early 80s hardcore was in fact my favourite kind of music. Anyway I digress… does that same instant avalability of info also makes it way easier to not really be into things in the same way that you are when you have to struggle to figure things out on your own via random mix tapes and random pen pal contact? Does it create a mass consumer culture where people greedily consume and regurgitate without thought? Where information about obscure bands formed in Nordic squats in the early 80s becomes almost like currency? Does that make sense…probably not. I have this image in my head of a Pac Man-like game where people are just consuming information hungrily and without pause, just gorging to own and feel important.

I think the Internet also re-inforces the idea of punk as a lifestyle choice/consumer phenomenon rather than a spirit, that sounds corny but I can't think of another way of explaining it really…I can't imagine a day when I will not call myself a punk, to me punk isn't so much about bulletbelts and Amebix buttpatches but it's an idea of opposition and freedom. Punk is obviously an aesthetic culture, messing with appearance is one of the fun things about punk and being a punk, but when things become so codified and punk stops being an idea of opposition and becomes a pose with a set collection of visual identifiers then how is it a revolutionary concept? There's nothing punk about blindly simulating the past, being a total replicant. I like have this cool picture of Void where they look like diseased preppies, their clothes aren't particularly "punk" but they just look wrong, out of place, like a question mark. Do kids feel like they have to have a ripped up Articles of Faith T-shirt and authentic Keith Morris style cycle cap to be hardcore now? I mean this is so obvious, but I guess I have just been thinking a lot about punk as being more than just a set of signifiers, the right records, the right reference points, the right outfit. Do people ever buy the "wrong" SSD record anymore?

As I said before this is more of a collection of thoughts and ideas than anything conclusive and it would be cool if people would write in and talk about their feelings on such weighty matters. Also if girls/women would write in and talk about their experiences/call me on my shiiiiit etc. I guess the general gist of all this is something along the lines of me feeling alienated from the politics of punk, trying to figure out how to make feminism and female punk identity and just punk politics relevant to my life/point of view. It feels like a lot of the politics in the scene now are either unspoken, like, "oh of course we are anti sexist/racist/homophobic...but let's not talk about that! Now back to those '84 Finnish punk demos." Or things are really explicit and cartoony, like watch me destroy society as I puke on myself outside of Burnt Ramen! Or maybe the green anarcho Crimethinc types and their notion of politics as a vegan potluck kissing booth, which makes me wanna puke. I like some instances of situationist sloganeering, which they seem to have adopted in a clumsy wholesale way. Turning the sharp witticisms of May '68 into a mouldy assortment of buttflappatch opportunistic freerider manifestos somehow seems so boring to me. Plus I hate hippies.

Anyway this is super convoluted and was really difficult to write. I wanted to say as a parting shot that the Limp Wrist show at Burnt Ramen was really inspiring and terrifying in many ways, some of which I will not go into, but the audience was truly insane, like a Glen E. Friedman photo of some old DC hardcore show, piled up and sweating and totally connected to the moment and the band. It was also truly mixed. There were so many girls, queers, boys, weird homeless dudes, old punks, sXe warrior types, you know. It was super inspiring to see teenage girls at the front screaming the words and holding their own in the pit. Speaking as a wussy aging punk girl who watched from behind the guitar amp on stage, the spectacle seemed really timeless, not like a retread of a only jock dudes up front of the aforementioned Glen E. Friedman picture reference. Girls holding their own in the pit? Maybe actions speak louder than words. Anyway. What do you think? Please write me! lpgibbon@yahoo.com or via MRR…

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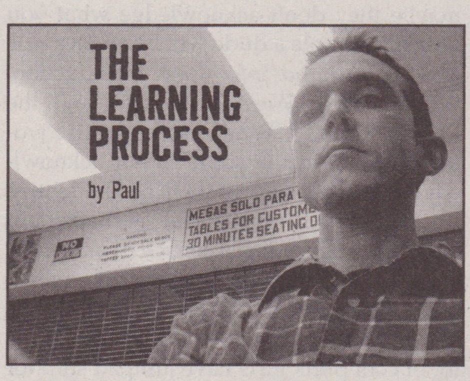
[1] Yeah. I hate that word. Sounds like we should be at a workshop at Columbus Fest '95

[2] Because Andrew Thomas Company style T-shirt slogans were really successful in not only changing the structure of society but also in profoundly affecting the minds of the gormless audiences at many sxe shows thruout the midwest in the early to mid-90s.

[3] Don't steal this band name or a small army of disgruntled Partisans fans will perform unspeakable things upon yr person.



THE LEARNING PROCESS

by Paul

On my second day here in Tokyo I met with Osamu of the band Assault, whose bass player, Kaoru, was recently killed in a car accident. Eiji of DSB and Osamu had both written to us at MRR requesting that we play one of Kaoru's songs on MRR Radio. We said some words of condolence and played a couple of Assault songs on the radio show. What I didn't realize was that we had given the song titles wrong, as happens quite often with Japanese releases.

After meeting up with Osamu at Record Shop Base in Koenji, we went out, along with Toshio from the record store, who speaks more English that Osamu, to hang out and have coffee. Or so I thought. The real purpose of meeting up with me for Osamu was to tell me how deeply upset he was that we didn't play the right song for Koaru on MRR Radio, and that we got the song titles wrong, and that I didn't respond to his last email about it. His good friend and bandmate had been tragically killed and I could not do this simple favor him and it made him very, very sad.

What could I do? All I could say was that I was sorry. I mean, I was. I am. This kind of criticism is a hard thing for me to deal with, but at least I had the language and culture difference as a buffer. Maybe we just didn't understand each other, or the Japanese express grief in a different way. I'm not as much of a fuck up and a flake as he made it seem, although maybe I do feel that way sometimes.

When we returned to the shop, I met another worker there name Takahiro, and I busted out some of my label's records that I had brought to sell. When I mentioned that Onion Flavored Rings was my band, I saw the gears turning in Takahiro's head.

"You were in another band before?"

To this I usually reply, "Sure, I've been in lots of bands." But I knew exactly what he was thinking, and my defenses were down after my previous encounter, so I fessed up.

I don't remember exactly what he said, but to paraphrase, it was something like, "Ohmygodohmygodohmygod... I am such a big fan!!!"

There was much blushing all around. Hand shakes, bows, giggling. Before I knew it he was on the phone to someone else about it, and I was told that his friend was coming to the store to meet me.

Soon after, Ken showed up with records in hand awaiting my autograph. More blushing, etc. Ken called his friend, and so on. The scene ends with me and Ariel being treated to beers and the best Italian food we've ever had by a bunch of the sweetest folks we've ever met.

If Osamu made me feel like a worthless turd who could do no right, the Koenji "East Bay" punks made me feel like the damn king of the world. It's only day three and I've already been on an 11-hour-long plane trip, an hour-long guilt trip, and if our plans for partying more with the Koenji kids pan out, a fucking 15-hour-long ego trip. The fasten seat belt sign has been turned off.

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So, hey, we're looking for a new coordinator at MRR. My time is almost up here. I plan to spend at least a few months helping to train the new coordinator, whoever that may be, and to finally get back some side projects I had going on here and in my non-MRR life, which I seem to vaguely remember.

There will be five golden tickets distributed amongst five random copies of this issue of Maximumrocknroll. If you found one of these tickets, you may become the next MRR coordinator! Not really, but if that sounded exciting to you, you should email us at mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. We are looking for someone who can multitask like it's going out of style, and who wouldn't mind living with the best punk record collection in the world...

More adventures in the far east next time. Sayonara!

paul@maximumrocknroll.com

YOU AXED FOR IT!
golnar nikpour

Why I Will Take a Basement Show over a Shitty Bar Any Day

Yesterday, I was in Santa Rosa, California, which is about an hour or so north of the city. As usual, punk rock was the reason for my trip. A bunch of sweaty bands played in a carpeted living room, with band members ranging from their mid-teens to their mid-thirties, representing a handful of different sub-genres and probably untold personality types, character flaws, and individual strengths. In between bands and conversations, I overheard a bunch of teenage punks discussing what untold nightmares await when you get to mid-twenties—evidently there is no escaping becoming either a total normal or that horror of horrors, a liberal. This made me smile of course because really, the mid-twenties are not so bad, or even really an anomalous age in punk rock anymore, at least not in the Bay Area. I'm on the verge of turning twenty-four and it was New Year's day, so my mood was thoughtful while I was packed into that tiny little room with the punks, and I contemplated the happenings of my first decade or so in punk rock. It's been over a decade of cramming into untold spaces just like that one—the basements and living rooms and rec rooms of those dedicated and brave enough to house DIY shows—and while the location, faces, and my wardrobe has changed over the years, the sense of strength through connection I derive from these shows is something that has remained constant.

I feel almost bad for those assorted twentysomethings I see walking around this city. You know, those perfectly manicured, professionally coifed minions of Hipdom; it must be boring to lead a bar band life, one without the presence of a giant bucket of vegan weirdness for the bands to eat or a rickety front porch to make fun of the not-so-good bands (or not-so-good fashion choices) from. Expensive vintage jackets and seven-dollar cocktails do not a community make, and honestly those kids' music is pretty boring. I am a twentysomething too, and a big city dweller at that so naturally I have gone to my share of bar shows. Even when the band is good, however, bar shows are a different animal altogether from the intimate settings of an all-ages DIY show. Not to say that there is no such thing as a dull house show, but the chances of pulling the ol' stand in the back and wish you were somewhere else is exponentially higher when hitting the twenty-one and up circuit. Maybe those kids at the show were right yesterday—the mid-twenties sure breed their fare share of lackluster people in painfully uninspiring circumstances.

My friend Layla recently described her continued involvement in the punk scene at the age of twenty-eight as the desire to never let herself slide into mediocrity, and I accept this assessment wholeheartedly. The things you're supposed to be doing by the time you're in you're mid-twenties (or late twenties or thirties or whatever) not only seem unappealing, but so hopelessly average. Fuck that. They tell us we're supposed to grow out of our rebellious phases, but why, and to whose benefit? I've been told before that it's a problem that I refuse to grow up, but I know myself pretty well, and I would say that I am significantly more responsible and put together than I was when I was fifteen. More grown up, that is. This doesn't mean, however, that I will accept a standard issue life, especially if since that seems to mean a life of staid, trite experiences at the expense of the spontaneous, the unpretentious, the uncatorizeable, or the fun.

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Goings on here at *Maximum*: you may have read it already in Paul's column, but he is ready to step down as coordinator of this here fanzine. Don't worry, he's been here since the single digits, and is going to remain a big part of the zine. If you are lucky, you may even be the person he trains to replace him. Sound interesting? Get in touch. I am probably gonna get more gushy and emotional in a few months when he's actually stepping down from the job, so I will use this space simply to say this: thanks Paul, you're the best.

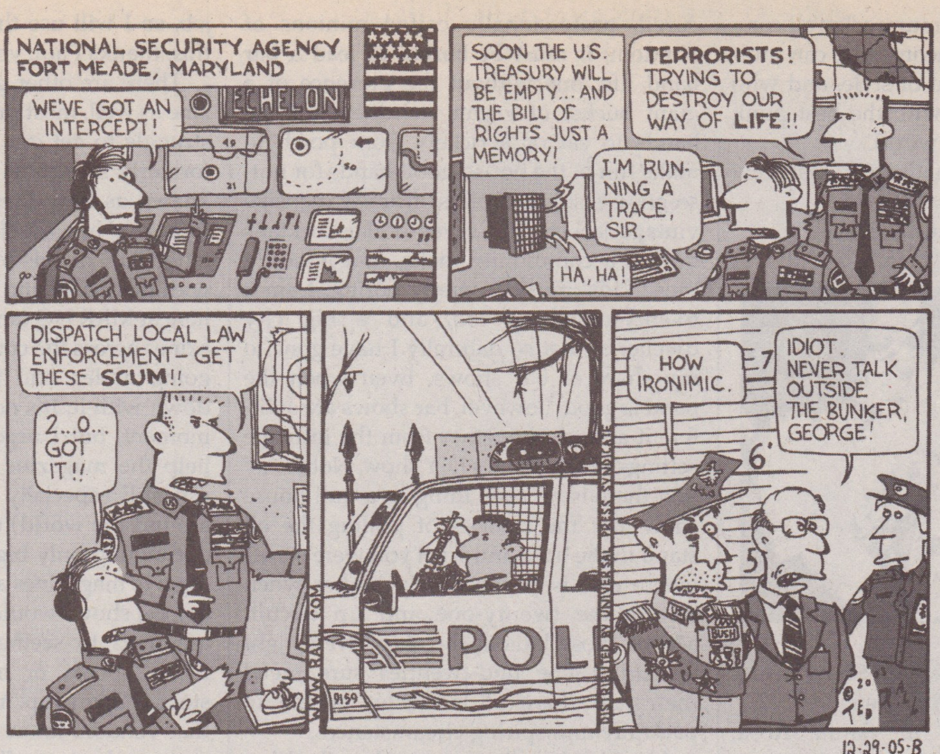
There are other goings on at the magazine as well, most prominently a prolonged struggle to get our newsstand distributor, formerly known as Big Top and currently known as Indy Press Newsstand Services to pay us in a timely fashion. Much of the latter half of this year was spent dealing with this crisis, and there was much worry here at MRR HQ (and at independent magazines across the country) that Big Top was going under, and that we would all go down with it. It's not nearly so grim at the moment, but I urge any of you who can help the magazine with distribution (we can still especially use overseas contacts around the world) to get in touch. We are not talking only big scale here—even taking five magazines a month and selling 'em at local shows would be a huge help. If you are used to seeing *Maximum* at a local record, book, or magazine store and it stops showing up, make sure to ask for it so that vendors know that you want it. And perhaps best of all, if you are a regular reader you can subscribe to the magazine and save some money while helping us get the magazine to you directly.

***

It's day two of 2006, and it has been raining all day, but I am optimistic about what's to come in the approaching months. I predict another excellent year for DIY punk, though I also see still further encroachment on our precious scene by the corporate leeches that would suck us dry. So here's a new years resolution for us all: keep punk DIY. Cut 'n' paste a fanzine, listen to Crucifix, set up a show, get involved in community radio (or start your own pirate radio station!), listen to what other bands are doing, set up your own distro, call people out on their racist, sexist, or homophobic bullshit, write MRR a letter, stay pissed, and (you knew it was coming) stay punk.

And hey you, out there, send me whatever it is that you're doing. Bands: I want to hear your demos, writers: I want to read your zines, girls: I want to hear your stories, ex-punks: I will gladly take your record collection off your hands, future pen pals: I am ready and eager for your correspondence, Tozibabe: I want to re-release your 7". So get in touch with me either through the MRR PO Box (my own PO Box coming soon) or on the interwizzle at:

golnar@maximumrocknroll.com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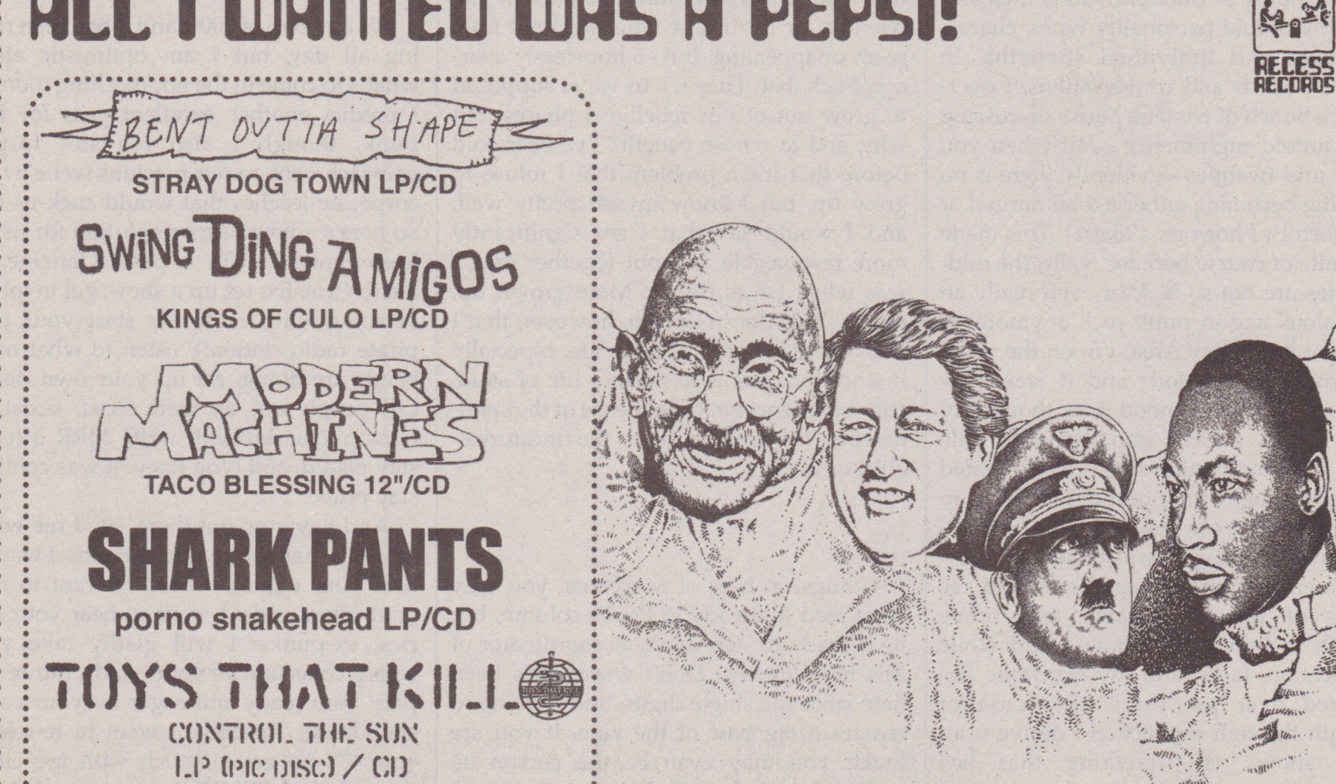
SOON THE U.S. TREASURY WILL BE EMPTY... AND THE BILL OF RIGHTS JUST A MEMORY!
TERRORISTS! TRYING TO DESTROY OUR WAY OF LIFE!!
I'M RUNNING A TRACE, SIR.
HA, HA!
DISPATCH LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT – GET THESE SCUM!!
2...0... GOT IT!!
POL
HOW IRONIMIC.
IDIOT. NEVER TALK OUTSIDE THE BUNKER, GEORGE!
BUSH
TED
12-29-05-B


ALL I WANTED WAS A PEPSI!

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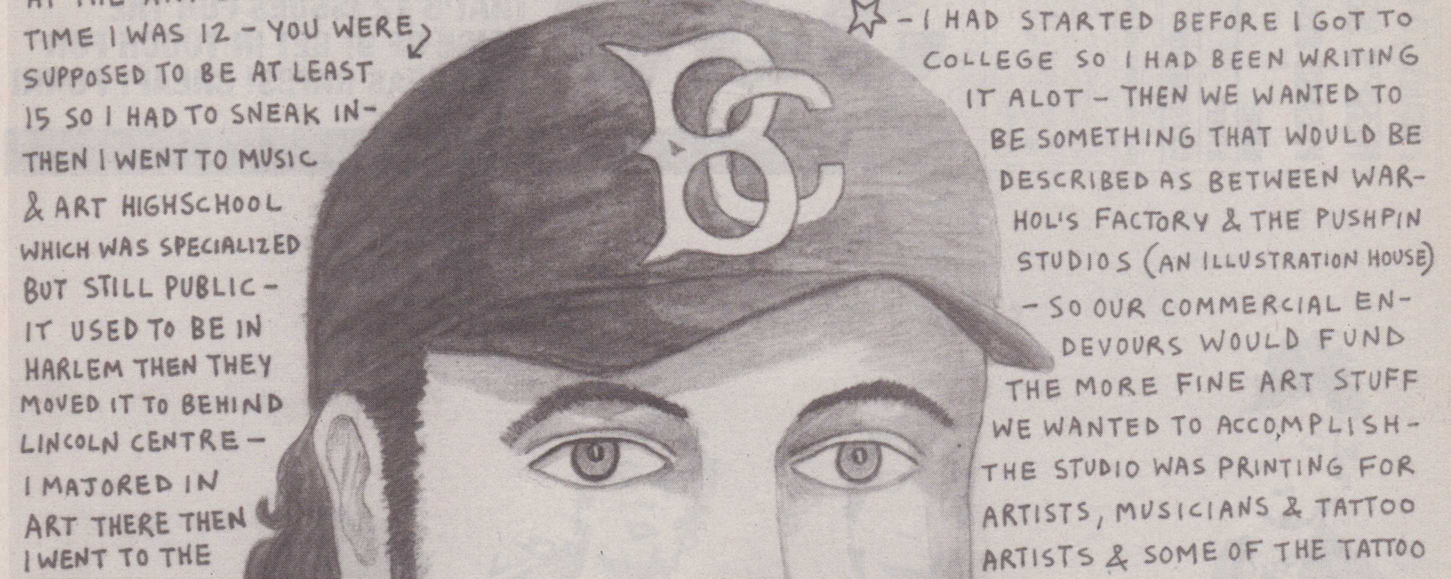
I WAS BORN IN COBBLE HILL BROOKLYN WHICH IS THE SAME NEIGHBORHOOD I LIVE IN NOW - I WAS BORN & RAISED THERE - I WENT TO PUBLIC SCHOOL 3 BLOCKS FROM THE HOUSE - IT WAS PRE-DOMINANTLY ITALIAN NIEGHBORHOOD - THERE WAS A BIG MOB PRESENCE WHICH THERE STILL IS TO SOME EXTENT - THERE WAS ALWAYS TENSION - MY MOM WAS A SINGLE MOTHER & AT THE TIME IF YOU WERE WHITE & NOT ITALIAN YOU WERE CONSIDERED A JEW SO THERE WAS A LOT OF NAME CALLING - MY MOTHER ALWAYS PUSHED ART AMONG OTHER CREATIVE STUFF BUT THE ART STUCK - I WENT TO THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM CHILDREN'S PROGRAM - I JUST ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE DRAWING - I WAS KIND OF INTO SUPER HERO COMICS WHEN I WAS IN JUNIOR HIGH LIKE THE X-MEN & THE AVENGERS - STUFF THAT WAS MORE ROMANTIC THAN WHAT WE DO NOW I GUESS - MY GOD-FATHER WAS A TEACHER AT THE ART STUDENTS LEAGUE SO MY MOM GOT ME DRAWING THE NUDE MODEL BY THE TIME I WAS 12 - YOU WERE ↙ SUPPOSED TO BE AT LEAST 15 SO I HAD TO SNEAK IN - THEN I WENT TO MUSIC & ART HIGHSCHOOL WHICH WAS SPECIALIZED BUT STILL PUBLIC - IT USED TO BE IN HARLEM THEN THEY MOVED IT TO BEHIND LINCOLN CENTRE - I MAJORED IN ART THERE THEN I WENT TO THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN - THATS WHERE I STARTED U.F.A. - URBAN FOLK ART - IT WAS FIRST THE NAME OF A GRAFFITTI CREW ☆ →

☆ - I HAD STARTED BEFORE I GOT TO COLLEGE SO I HAD BEEN WRITING IT ALOT - THEN WE WANTED TO BE SOMETHING THAT WOULD BE DESCRIBED AS BETWEEN WARHOL'S FACTORY & THE PUSHPIN STUDIOS (AN ILLUSTRATION HOUSE) - SO OUR COMMERCIAL ENDEVOURS WOULD FUND THE MORE FINE ART STUFF WE WANTED TO ACCOMPLISH - THE STUDIO WAS PRINTING FOR ARTISTS, MUSICIANS & TATTOO ARTISTS & SOME OF THE TATTOO ARTISTS THOUGHT MY DRAWING STYLE WOULD LEND ITSELF NICELY TO TATTOOS - U.F.A. WAS TIRED OF DOING PRINT WORK AND I GOT OFFERED A TATTOO APPRENTICESHIP SO IT WAS THE PERFECT TIME - I PUT THE PRINT EQUIPMENT AWAY & TOOK THE APPRENTICESHIP - THAT WAS 1998-99 - NOW TATTOOING IS GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO AFFORD MY FINER-ART STUFF X



Adam Suerte - 10/25/2K5 - Lower East Side NYC

I can't remember when i first met Adam – I think it was at ABC No Rio & I think U.F.A. (Urban Folk Arts) was involved in one of the art shows – or it could have been at an Asstroland show – I definitely see him every year in the summer at the MoCCA fest (Museum of Comic & Cartoon Art) where he sells his amazing Aprendiz commix, which are all about how he got into doing tattoos & the arduous training it requires – Adam is now an accomplished tattoo artist in Brooklyn NY – if you need some ink or some comix look him up!! www.adamsuerte.com to contact fly email: fly@bway.net– put MRR in the subject so i know its not spam PEOP(le)s #3 zine is now available!! 30 pages of PEOPs – send $5 pp in USA $6 pp OS to Fly PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn NYC NY 10276 – sorry if its too expensive but i lost my free photocopying & that #%&*$'s expensive!!

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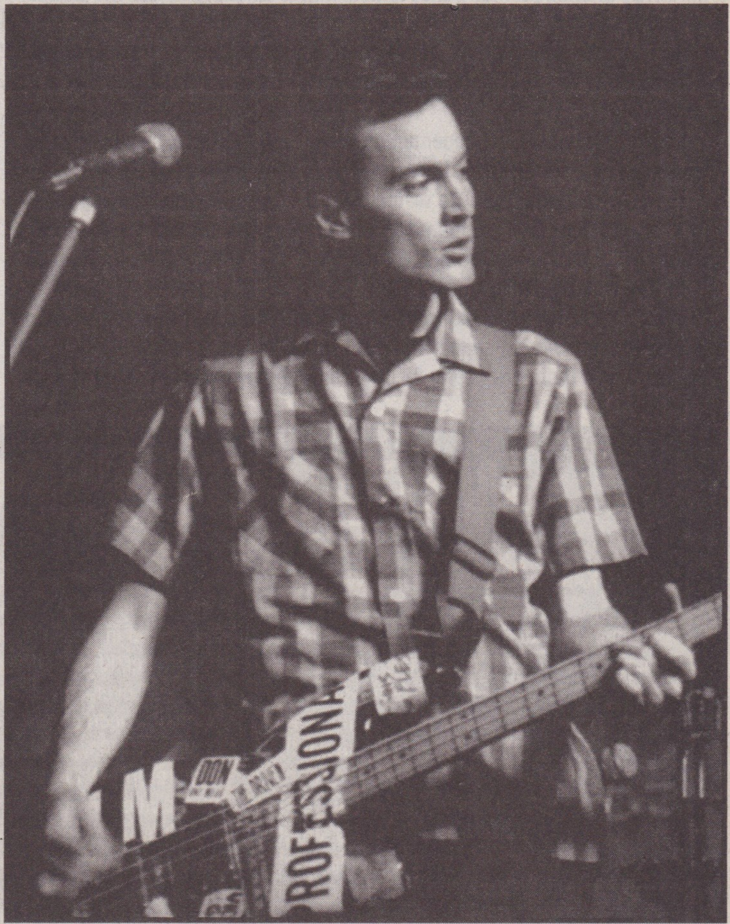
MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #273 COMPILED BY ARIEL CELESTE

REST IN PEACE: JIM MACLEAN



On Tuesday, November 29, Jim Maclean passed away. In addition to being in at least a half dozen bands and a friend to many, he was the much-looked-up-to big brother and sometime band mate of *MRR* shitworker Hal. Jim and Hal were as close as brothers could be without being Chang and Eng. They were an excellent pair. Hal plays drums at a million miles an hour. Jim's bass playing wasn't Dee Dee Ramone or Ron Carter, but sounded tough and melodic at the same time.

His songs show a talent equal to that of Hank Williams, but not as simple. In this, there are similarities. There are the goofy crowd pleasers along with the personal, "heart" songs that demand reflection. Both died too young. The differences are obvious. Jim was a college-educated geologist, while Hank made it through eighth grade, if that. Hank wrote songs for money. Some of them happened to be works of heart-breaking sincerity. Jim wrote songs for the sake of telling a story, or presenting a viewpoint. Popularity and commercial appeal were not a huge concern. Another big difference is, before he came down with "an awful bad case of them low-down blues," Jim was the best thing that could happen to a party. Whereas, according to those who knew him, Hank was either a problem drunk or a wallflower. In other words, Jim was the life of the party while Hank was kind of dull.

Jim's tunes are so infectious that when you hear them, they sound almost like traditional, public domain compositions. Were it not for the unmistakable Jim characteristics, one might be tempted to think they were stolen from a great composer.

During the mid-to-late 1980s, Sewer Trout were one of a few tolerable bands. Their approach differed from other independent, DIY bands in that the songs were actually good and the trio never failed to show a sense of humor. A perfect example of this is a pro-choice rally that was held at the Capitol. Hal and Jim could be seen holding signs that read, "Male Chauvinist Pig For Choice." It was this mentality that led to the composing, recording and release of Sewer Trout For President. They hit the campaign trail with such enthusiasm that it was easy to think of them as serious candidates who might actually stand a chance.

There was a lull while Jim finished becoming a geologist, and then a new batch of songs on a 10-inch before Sewer Trout called it quits. At or around this time, madman Erik Benson played Professor Higgins to Jim and Hal's My Fair Lady and had them playing concertos and Greek lullabies among other, off-kilter originals. They began as Oyster Toilet Mango, but eventually became Well Hung Monks.

Following the demise of both The Trout and The Monks, Jim laid low for a while. Luckily, while working as an on-site geologist, he had an acoustic guitar for company. Because of this, he came up with several songs. A few of these were to form the basis for Elmer's set list. When this writer heard an early tape of these, it was a moment of great joy. Jim had returned and was doing what only he could do.

Elmer got going and stayed going for a good many years. They could be counted on to blow the roof off any place they played. Their songs might have even been better than those of Sewer Trout. Jim was so Goddamned cool. This writer was often envious of Jim's talent and charisma. There were a few lineup changes, but the last one was the most stable and consisted of Scotty and Geof from Motherload and drummer Job. When things started slowing down for Elmer, Jim got into a funk and had to be placed on medication. The drugs seemed to work pretty well until about six or so months ago when he was given mood elevators. The new meds made a bad situation worse. Still, recently Jim was threatening to play music again. This was encouraging.

Jim was a dynamo on stage. Staring people down in a way Johnny Rotten would envy, strumming, no, bludgeoning the strings, he put his all into every set. Of course, he insisted that it was all he could to just to get through the set, but that was all shuck and jive. He was a complete professional who cared about the audience. He wanted to give people a great show every time. In this, he was successful. I can't recall a single bad show. No matter what, something special happened every time.

We have lost a great rock n roller.

—Ed Hunter

Dave Smith has started a blog of Jim stories at www.myspace.com/nokilli

Davis Hayes has posted some music at www.myspace.com/verysmall

TRANS RIGHTS IN BRAZIL

By MICHAEL ASTOR, Associated Press Writer

For most, it's a choice of the men's room or the women's. A Brazilian city is trying to give an option to those who don't fit easily into either category.

A bill passed by the Nova Iguacu city council on Tuesday would require night clubs, shopping malls, movie theaters, and large restaurants to provide a third type of bathroom for transvestites. Mayor Lindberg Farias will decide whether to make it a law.

"A lot of lawmakers didn't want to deal with this issue, but it's a serious problem in society," said city Councilman Carlos Eduardo Moreira. "It's a way to put an end to prejudice."

Moreira, a 32-year-old policeman on leave from the force, said he got the idea when dozens of transvestites showed up for a local samba show.

"It was a real problem. The women didn't feel comfortable having them in the ladies' room, and the men didn't want them in their bathroom either," said Moreira, who is married and the father of two children. "I'm not doing this for my own benefit."

He said the "alternative bathrooms" could also be used by men or women who didn't mind sharing space with transvestites.

Moreira said there are nearly 28,000 transvestites in Nova Iguacu, a poor city of about 800,000 on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro.

Moreira said many transvestites are reluctant to go out because there's no bathroom for them. And he denied that the cost of building a third bathroom would be a big problem for restaurant or club owners.

"It requires an initial investment, but after that, the establishment will end up making more money because it will have a larger public. And transvestites like to spend," he said.

The issue has divided gay groups; some feared it could segregate gays, while others said it recognized a problem within the gay community.

"At first we were against the law, but after some discussion we decided we had to support it because it addresses a real problem for a segment of the gay community," said Eugenio Ibiapino dos Santos, a founder of the Pink Triangle Association, a gay group in Nova Iguacu. "We see it as a way to open a discussion about civil rights."

Brazil is generally more tolerant of homosexuality than other Latin American countries, but discrimination still exists.

A study conducted by the Candido Mendes University in Rio de Janeiro found that 60 percent of Rio's homosexuals had met some type of harassment, and 17 percent said they had experienced physical violence.

WAIT...NOT EVEN PUNK ROCK?!

By NASSER KARIMI, Associated Press Writer

Hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has banned all Western music from Iran's state radio and TV stations — an eerie reminder of the 1979 Islamic revolution when popular music was outlawed as "un-Islamic" under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Today, though, the sounds of hip-hop can be heard blaring from car radios in Tehran's streets, and Eric Clapton's "Rush" and the Eagles' "Hotel California" regularly accompany Iranian broadcasts.

No more — the official IRAN Persian daily reported Monday that Ahmadinejad, as head of the Supreme Cultural Revolutionary Council, ordered the enactment of an October ruling by the council to ban all Western music, including classical music, on state broadcast outlets.

"Blocking indecent and Western music from the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting is required," according to a statement on the council's official Web site.

The Iranian guitarist Babak Riahipour lamented what he called a "terrible decision." "The decision shows a lack of knowledge and experience", he said.

Music was outlawed by Khomeini soon after the 1979 revolution; Khomeini claimed it was "intoxicating." Many musicians went abroad and built an Iranian music industry in Los Angeles.

But as revolutionary fervor started to fade, some light classical music was allowed on Iranian radio and television; some public concerts reappeared in the late 1980s.

But later, Khomeini allowed classical music to be played over state radio. Since his death, pop music has been creeping into Iranian shops.

In the 1990s, particularly during the presidency of reformist Mohammad Khatami starting in 1997, authorities began relaxing restrictions further. These days in Iran, Western music, films and clothing are widely available in Iran. Bootleg videos and DVDs of films banned by the state are widely available on the black market.

However, women are prohibited from singing in public, except to a segregated female-only audience. Hard-liners were afraid the voice of a woman soloist might arouse impure thoughts in men. Women are allowed to sing as part of a chorus.

Ahmadinejad's order means the state broadcasting authority must execute the decree and prepare a report on its implementation within six months, according to the *IRAN* Persian daily.

Earlier this month, Ali Rahbari, conductor of Tehran's symphony orchestra, resigned and left Iran to protest the treatment of the music industry in Iran.

Before leaving, he played Beethoven's Ninth Symphony to packed Tehran theater houses over several nights last month — its first performance in Tehran since the 1979 revolution. The performances angered many conservatives and prompted newspaper columns accusing Rahbari of promoting Western values.

The ban applies to state-run radio and TV. But Iranians with satellite dishes can get broadcasts originating outside the country.

Ahmadinejad won office in August on a platform of reverting to ultraconservative principles, following eight years of reformist-led rule under Khatami.

During his presidential campaign, Ahmadinejad also promised to confront what he called the Western cultural invasion of Iran and promote Islamic values.

Since then, Ahmadinejad has jettisoned Iran's moderation in foreign policy and pursued a purge in the government, replacing pragmatic veterans with former military commanders and inexperienced religious hard-liners.

International concerns are high over Iran's nuclear program, with the United States accusing Tehran of pursuing an atomic weapons program. Iran denies the claims. The latest media ban also includes censorship of content of films.

"Supervision of content from films, TV series and their voice-overs is emphasized in order to support spiritual cinema and to eliminate triteness and violence," the council said in a statement on its Web site.

The council has also issued a ban on foreign movies that promote "arrogant powers," an apparent reference to the United States.

TESTING DRUGS ON INDIA'S POOR

from www.wired.com

India has been the focus of medical research since the time when sunburned men with pith helmets and degrees from prestigious European medical schools came to catalog tropical illnesses.

The days of the Raj are long gone, but multinational corporations are riding high on the trend toward globalization by taking advantage of India's educated work force and deep poverty to turn South Asia into the world's largest clinical-testing petri dish.

The sudden influx of drug companies to India resembles the gold rush frontier, according to Sean Philpott, managing editor of The American Journal of Bioethics.

"Not only are research costs low, but there is a skilled work force to conduct the trials," he said. In the rush to reap profits, Philpott cautions that drug companies may not be sensitive to how poverty can undermine the spirit of informed consent. "Individuals who participate in Indian clinical trials usually won't be educated. Offering $100 may be undue enticement; they may not even realize that they are being coerced," he said.

For decades, pharmaceutical research in India didn't rely on clinical testing. Scientists mostly reverse-engineered drugs already developed in other countries. But in March, everything changed when India submitted to pressure from the World Trade Organization to stop the practice and implement rules that prohibit local companies from creating generic versions of patented drugs.

Now, pharmaceutical companies can rest assured they won't lose profits to a domestic market, and India is suddenly a profitable location for performing the expensive tests required for Food and Drug Administration clearance of any drug. Though it is still too soon to tell how much the legislative change has boosted drug development, observers say the number of studies conducted by multinational drug companies has sharply increased since March.

Given the rising cost of drug research in the United States and Europe, more and more drug companies are conducting clinical trials in developing countries where government oversight is more lax and research can be done for a fraction of the cost. According to a 2004 study by Rabo India Finance, a subsidiary of the Netherlands-based Rabo Bank, clinical trials account for more than 40 percent of drug-development costs. The study also found that performing the studies in India can bring the price down by about 60 percent.

By 2010, total spending on outsourcing clinical trials to India could top $2 billion, according to Ashish Singh, vice president of Bain & Co., a consulting firm that reports on the health-care industry.

Regardless of where clinical trials are performed, the FDA requires the same evidence showing that a drug is safe and effective before it will approve any drug, according to a written comment from Ken Johnson, senior vice president of The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America Foundation.

And it's the responsibility of the institutional review boards at the medical institutions where the studies take place to "actively pursue issues of informed consent," according to another written comment from Jeff Trewhitt, a spokesman for the pharmaceutical industry trade group.

Nevertheless, even before the anti-generic rules were enacted, companies performing clinical trials in India saw their share of problems. In 2004, two India-based pharmaceutical companies, Shantha Biotech in Hyderabad and Biocon in Bangalore, came under scrutiny for conducting illegal clinical trials that led to eight deaths.

Shantha Biotech failed to obtain proper consent from patients while testing a drug meant to treat heart attacks. Biocon tested a genetically modified form of insulin without the proper approval from the Drug Controller General of India or the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee.

In another incident, Sun Pharmaceuticals convinced doctors to prescribe Letrozole, a breast cancer drug, to more than 400 women as a fertility treatment in a covert clinical trial — and used the results to promote the drug for the unapproved use.

Shantha Biotech, Biocon and Sun Pharmaceuticals did not return e-mails seeking comments for this story.

Pfizer and Eli Lilly have been conducting clinical trials in India for many years, and Novo Nordisk and GlaxoSmithKline have also set up trials in the last two years. The companies did not respond to requests for comment.

Companies are attracted to India not only because of the huge patient pool and skilled workers, but also because many potential study volunteers are "treatment naïve," meaning they have not been exposed to the wide array of biomedical drugs that most Western patients have, said Stefan Ecks, a lecturer in social anthropology at the School of Social and Political Studies in Edinburgh who recently published a paper on the marketing of antidepressants in India.

"Doctors are easier to recruit for trials because they don't have to go through the same ethics procedures as their Western colleagues," Ecks said. "And patients ask fewer questions about what is going on."

After the outcry against Shantha and Biocon, the Indian government adopted stricter ethical guidelines for clinical research, but it's too early to know whether companies are abiding by the new rules.

Also, critics say study volunteers may be taking risks without the potential for reward. Since many pharmaceutical companies are developing the drugs for markets in industrialized nations, it is unlikely that India's poor will have access to most of the new medicine.

"Third World lives are worth much less than the European lives. That is what colonialism was all about," said Srirupa Prasad, a visiting assistant professor of medical history and bioethics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

REST IN PEACE: KAORU

Earlier this month, Kaoru, the bass player of Japanese hardcore band Assault died in a tragic motorcycle accident after a hardcore show. Assault had released a number of EPs and two full-lengths, including two records on Partners in Crime Records in the United States. In 2003, they toured the United States with US hardcore stalwarts From Ashes Rise, inspiring American audiences with their fun-filled, passionate, and incendiary live acts. In recent months, Kaoru has also been playing with Japanese greats DSB. Shortly after his death, DSB bassist and close friend Eiji emailed *Maximumrocknroll:*

"Kaoru was the best bass player and best friends to me—please pray for his happiness in the other world." Rest in peace, Kaoru.

BUSH DEFENDS DOMESTIC SURVEILLANCE DECISION

By Deborah Tate

Senate Democrats are questioning the legality of an intelligence program authorized by President Bush to secretly monitor telephone calls and emails between people in the United States and suspected terrorists in other countries. Controversy over the intelligence program has sparked wider concerns about government spying on US citizens.

Senate Democrats are backing calls for congressional hearings into the secret program, as they question whether President Bush had the legal authority to approve the wiretapping of American citizens in the United States without court oversight.

"The President does not have a leg to stand on legally with regard to this program," said Senator Russ Feingold, a Wisconsin Democrat,

At a news conference, President Bush defended his decision to authorize the program, saying it was a necessary measure to protect Americans from terrorist attacks. He said he approved the wiretapping without court orders because it would allow authorities to move more quickly in detecting potential threats.

But Senator Carl Levin, a Michigan Democrat, rejected the president's rationale, saying authorities can act quickly under existing law:

"He cannot just use the necessity to move quickly as an excuse to bypass the law, which we put in place, which is a true check on executive power," said Senator Levin.

Congressional concern over the program was a contributing factor to last Friday's Senate vote blocking action on the anti-terrorism law known as the Patriot Act, which is set to expire at the end of the month.

Many Senators, led by minority Democrats, want stronger civil liberties protections in the legislation extending the law, which gives the government greater authority to track suspected terrorists. The House of Representatives has already approved the measure.

President Bush repeated his call on the Senate to end the delay and pass the bill.

A number of Democrats, and some Republicans, favor extending the current law by three months to allow lawmakers to craft legislation with stronger civil liberties' safeguards, a proposal opposed by Mr. Bush.

Democrats say if the Senate cannot break its deadlock and the Patriot Act expires at the end of the month, it will be the president who is to blame because he opposes the short-term extension of the current law.

Senator Harry Reid of Nevada is the Senate's top Democrat:

"The burden of it not being in effect is solely on the shoulders of the president, without any question," said Mr. Reid.

Legislation to reauthorize the Patriot Act remains on the Senate floor, and Republican leaders are urging Senators to continue debating the bill in hopes of building more support for passage this week.

But Senator Reid says the legislation is all but dead.

WORLDWIDE ANTI-CAPITALIST PROTESTS

Protest against capital and its democracy of the rich at the University of Chile
frrom www.anarchistnews.org

At the Juan Gómez Millas campus of the University of Chile (in Santiago), masked demonstrators broke with the tranquility and passivity imposed by capital and fought for nearly 40 minutes against police using firebombs and stones.

Propaganda was spread (through shouting, leaflets, banners, and graffiti) indicating that the main reason for this direct action was the upcoming elections which perpetuate exploitation and domination by the rich.

Some slogans and graffiti messages (which included the circle A symbol for anarchism) used in relation to this direct action:

"Because we have nothing, we will destroy everything"
"Against the electoral circus! In the streets!"
"Against the democracy of the rich - struggle in the streets"
"Elections prolong slavery and we denounce and fight them"
"Because the vote only makes the rich powerful, we've chosen violence"
"Against the election of future exploiters"
"Against all authority, verticalism and central committees"

Suspected Anarchists Stage Overnight Attacks in Athens, Salonika
from www.anarchistnews.org

Greek authorities are reporting 15 cars burned overnight at three Italian automobile dealerships in Athens and two bombs set off outside bank offices in the northern city of Salonika.

Officials attribute the attacks to anarchist groups, noting an increase in their activity in recent weeks. They say cars were destroyed at three Fiat dealerships and among vehicles parked nearby. One of the parked vehicles was the property of the Greek Orthodox Church.

In Salonika, attackers threw gas canisters at two offices of the private Eurobank, damaging their entrances. No injuries were reported in those incidents.

Earlier, about 20 youths attacked two police officers Thursday, getting away with a handgun. The Associated Press says one of the officers was hospitalized.

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REST IN PEACE: RICHARD "BOMER" MANZULLO

(July 19th 1967- Dec. 12th 2005)

I met Bomer (Bomber) when I was 13 or 14 years old. My mother rented a house on the cliff at Summerland beach and she, my sister and I moved in. Bomer was good friends with Jericho, the owner's son, who lived in a trailer on the property. So Bomer pretty much came with the house. He was there 24/7. I had a drum kit in my bedroom and a guitar and amp. I had been playing drums for a couple years already. After 20 minutes, Bomer was already better than I was on the drums. He was like that with everything. He never studied in school and got all As. He was the same with guitar, bass, skating, surfing, etc. Although it was amazing, it was also kind of annoying. My family moved to Carpinteria and about six months later I ran into Bomer again. He had moved into an apartment half a block from me. We started playing together again and started making songs and decided we needed to form a band.

We formed RKL in 1981. Bomer soon started writing the majority of the music. He played so fast and tight that we were all forced to do the same. He was a perfectionist and expected the same from us. Through the years we went on many crazy tours and went through countless amazing experiences. There's no doubt in my mind that I wouldn't be where I am today without his drive and talent rubbing off on me.

Everyone who met Bomer would tell you what an amazing character he was. He was hilarious. I'm sure anyone who knew him could tell you unbelievable stories about him. He was the center of attention where ever he was. His humor rubbed off on everyone and many of his hilarities have become part of people's everyday vocabulary (SUCKAGE!).

I could always tell when Bomer had been at my house because my guitar would have a broken string. Every time he played drums there would be a pile of sawdust at his feet. His sticks would look like they had been ravaged by a pack of rabid beavers! He always had billows of steam coming off of him after a set. It was ridiculous how fast and hard he would play live. It was nearly impossible to keep up. Sometimes I would have to look back in disbelief.

I believe he was one of the best (and most un-recognized) punk rock drummers of our generation. He was an awesome musician, artist and most of all, friend. I will miss him dearly.

I'm sure he is showing the angels how a harp was meant to be *rocked*.

—Chris Rest RKL

I first met Bomer (Bomber) and the guys in RKL in late '83 I believe. Sometime around Xmas. I was living at the Vats and we heard about this zany group of kids from Santa Barbara in the basement that were huffing liquid paper to get high but are in town to play the Mabuhay Gardens. I loved the Nardcore bands and RKL was top notch. When I heard in '84 that they needed a bass player, Bomber taught me the tunes, I tried out and it looked like I got the spot. I jumped in the van and split down to S.B. and Hollywood with them, stayed at Ded Ted's house and first got a major dose of Bomber and RKL—exactly like the words from "Ded Ted's" from "Keep Laughing." Then Vince was back in the band, I was out as bass player, then in as second guitar player, then out, then sometime in '85 I ran into Bomber and he said the band was back in SF for good and that they wanted me to play guitar. I didn't feel too confident since I was just a skinny weird punker from Texas, but Bomber and I had great chemistry when it came to humor and jamming and laughing at life. He taught me all the songs, the second guitar parts, and talked me up to the band. It all clicked into place and we were off. Through the years, Bomber and Chris nursed my musicianship into being a few notches below them, but they were unstoppable. We were all best friends and went through a lot of growing up together. I had never met a band with such a charismatic drummer who ran the show like he did. Bomber was the most amazing musician and character I'd ever met. He had a way of making someone who was insecure feel confident, since his own confidence would rub off on you. And he could talk you down in a heartbeat if he thought you needed it. But he had the talent and the drive, not only songwriting, drumming, bass, guitar, and vocals, but also as a hell of an artist, a cook, a comic, and a philosopher. He went from being a skinhead (with a black bass player, which really blew some racist skinheads minds—I think he loved that) to a health food freak with dreadlocks. He was a tough, tattooed, and intimidating guy if he wanted to be but when the opportunity rose he would never fight. And he had his dark side—don't we all. Most true artists do. I think with all his unbelievable energy and endless pursuits through life, the one thing he really liked was freaking people out. And sometimes it was so fucking funny that he has us in stitches. The stories are endless. A book could be written about him and his antics. I heard recently that he had been playing a lot of piano—we'd been waiting for that Bomber symphony/rock opera he's been working on. Sadly, only our friends in the other world will get to enjoy it until we're all there with them.

—Barry / RKL

ALL HE WANTED WAS A PEPSI...

Cop Said to Taser Partner Over Soft Drink
sfgate.com

A police officer has been charged with using a Taser on his partner during an argument over whether they should stop for a soft drink.

Ronald Dupuis, 32, was charged Wednesday with assault and could face up to three months in jail if convicted. The six-year veteran was fired after the Nov. 3 incident.

Dupuis and partner Prema Graham began arguing after Dupuis demanded she stop their car at a store so he could buy a soft drink, according to a police report.

The two then struggled over the steering wheel, and Dupuis hit her leg with his department-issued Taser, the report said. She was not seriously hurt.

Hamtramck police union lawyer Eugene Bolanowski said he expected Dupuis to hire a private lawyer.

Hamtramck is a city of 23,000 surrounded by Detroit.

VIRTUAL SWEATSHOPS AND REAL LIFE EXPLOITATION

from an article by David Barboza

One of China's newest factories operates here in the basement of an old warehouse. Posters of World of Warcraft and Magic Land hang above a corps of young people glued to their computer screens, pounding away at their keyboards in the latest hustle for money.

The people working at this clandestine locale are "gold farmers." Every day, in 12-hour shifts, they "play" computer games by killing onscreen monsters and winning battles, harvesting artificial gold coins and other virtual goods as rewards that, as it turns out, can be transformed into real cash.

That is because, from Seoul to San Francisco, affluent online gamers who lack the time and patience to work their way up to the higher levels of gamedom are willing to pay the young Chinese here to play the early rounds for them.

"For 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, my colleagues and I are killing monsters," said a 23-year-old gamer who works here in this makeshift factory and goes by the online code name Wandering. "I make about $250 a month, which is pretty good compared with the other jobs I've had. And I can play games all day."

He and his comrades have created yet another new business out of cheap Chinese labor. They are tapping into the fast-growing world of "massively multiplayer online games," which involve role playing and often revolve around fantasy or warfare in medieval kingdoms or distant galaxies.

With more than 100 million people worldwide logging on every month to play interactive computer games, game companies are already generating revenues of $3.6 billion a year from subscriptions, according to DFC Intelligence, which tracks the computer gaming market.

For the Chinese in game-playing factories like these, though, it is not all fun and games. These workers have strict quotas and are supervised by bosses who equip them with computers, software and Internet connections to thrash online trolls, gnomes and ogres.

As they grind through the games, they accumulate virtual currency that is valuable to game players around the world. The games allow players to trade currency to other players, who can then use it to buy better armor, amulets, magic spells and other accoutrements to climb to higher levels or create more powerful characters.

The Internet is now filled with classified advertisements from small companies - many of them here in China - auctioning for real money their powerful figures, called avatars. These ventures join individual gamers who started marketing such virtual weapons and wares a few years ago to help support their hobby.

This virtual economy is blurring the line between fantasy and reality. A few years ago, online subscribers started competing with other players from around the world. And before long, many casual gamers started asking other people to babysit for their accounts, or play while they were away.That has spawned the creation of hundreds - perhaps thousands - of online gaming factories here in China. By some estimates, there are well over 100,000 young people working in China as full-time gamers, toiling away in dark Internet cafes, abandoned warehouses, small offices and private homes.

Most of the players here actually make less than a quarter an hour, but they often get room, board and free computer game play in these "virtual sweatshops." "It's unimaginable how big this is," says Chen Yu, 27, who employs 20 full-time gamers here in Fuzhou. "They say that in some of these popular games, 40 or 50 percent of the players are actually Chinese farmers."

For many online gamers, the point is no longer simply to play. Instead they hunt for the fanciest sword or the most potent charm, or seek a shortcut to the thrill of sparring at the highest level. And all of that is available - for a price.

"What we're seeing here is the emergence of virtual currencies and virtual economies," says Peter Ludlow, a longtime gamer and a professor of philosophy at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. "People are making real money here, so these games are becoming like real economies."

The Chinese government estimates that there are 24 million online gamers in China, meaning that nearly one in four Internet users here play online games.
And many online gaming factories have come to resemble the thousands of textile mills and toy factories that have moved here from Taiwan, Hong Kong and other parts of the world to take advantage of China's vast pool of cheap labor.

"They're exploiting the wage difference between the U.S. and China for unskilled labor," says Edward Castronova, a professor of telecommunications at Indiana University and the author of "Synthetic Worlds," a study of the economy of online games. "The cost of someone's time is much bigger in America than in China."
But gold farming is controversial. Many hard-core gamers say the factories are distorting the games. What is more, the big gaming companies say the factories are violating the terms of use of the games, which forbid players to sell their virtual goods for real money. They have vowed to crack down on those suspected of being small businesses rather than individual gamers.

"We know that such business exists, and we are against it," says Guolong Jin, a spokesman for N-Sina, a Chinese joint venture with NC Soft, the Korean creator of Lineage, one of the most popular online games. "Playing games should be fun and entertaining. It's not a way to trade and make money."

Blizzard Entertainment, a division of Vivendi Universal and the creator of World of Warcraft, one of the world's most popular games with more than 4.5 million online subscribers, has also called the trading illegal.

But little has been done to halt the mushrooming black market in virtual goods, many available for sale on eBay, Yahoo, and other online sites.

In fact, the trading of virtual property is so lucrative that some big online gaming companies have jumped into the business, creating their own online marketplaces. Sony Online Entertainment, the creator of EverQuest, a popular medieval war and fantasy game, recently created Station Exchange. Sony calls the site an alternative to "crooked sellers in unsanctioned auctions."

Other start-up companies are also rushing in, acting as international brokers to match buyers and sellers in different countries, and contracting out business to Chinese gold-farming factories.

"We're like a stock exchange. You can buy and sell with us," says Alan Qiu, a founder of the Shanghai-based Ucdao.com. "We farm out the different jobs. Some people say, 'I want to get from Level 1 to 60,' so we find someone to do that."
Now there are factories all over China. In central Henan Province, one factory has 300 computers. At another factory in western Gansu Province, the workers log up to 18 hours a day.

The operators are mostly young men like Luo Gang, a 28-year-old college graduate who borrowed $25,000 from his father to start an Internet cafe that morphed into a gold farm on the outskirts of Chongqing in central China.

Mr. Luo has 23 workers, who each earn about $75 a month.

"If they didn't work here they'd probably be working as waiters in hot pot restaurants," he said, "or go back to help their parents farm the land - or more likely, hang out on the streets with no job at all."

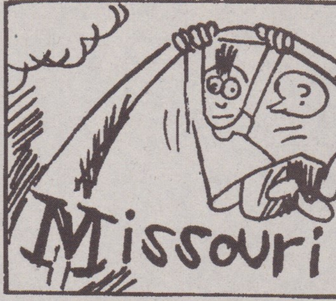
Here in coastal Fujian Province, several gold farm operators offered access to their underground facilities recently, on the condition that their names not be disclosed because the legal and tax status of some of the operations is in question.
One huge site here in Fuzhou has over 100 computers in a series of large, dark rooms. About 70 players could be seen playing quietly one weekday afternoon, while some players slept by the keyboard.

"We recruit through newspaper ads," said the 30-something owner, whose workers range from 18 to 25 years old. "They all know how to play online games, but they're not willing to do hard labor."

Another operation here has about 40 computers lined up in the basement of an old dilapidated building, all playing the same game. Upstairs were unkempt, closet-size dormitory rooms where several gamers slept on bunk beds; the floors were strewn with hot pots. The owners concede that the risks are enormous. The global gaming companies regularly shut accounts they suspect are engaged in farming. And the government here is cracking down on Internet addiction now, monitoring more closely how much time each player spends online.

To survive, the factories employ sophisticated gaming strategies. They hide their identities online, hire hackers to seek out new strategies, and create automatic keys to bolster winnings.But at some point, says Mr. Yu, the Fuzhou factory operator who started out selling computer supplies and now has an army of gamers outside his office here, he knows he will have to move on."My ultimate goal is to do Internet-based foreign trade," he says, sitting in a bare office with a solid steel safe under his desk. "Online games are just my first step into the business."

ST. LOUIS, USA



When I bought the most recent issue of *MRR*, #270, at the vintage record store in St. Louis, the checkout clerk said, " I can't believe (*MRR*) has a barcode now. That's so not punk." At any rate, our brief convo turned to her saying there was lack of solid punk/hardcore bands in St. Louis.

I left the store with new records in tow and thought, "Someone should really document what's going on in St. Louis right now, or else over-the-hill punks are going to continue to feel jaded!" To continue my personal crusade to keep 30-something punks feel relevant, here is the 2005 STL Scene Report. Naturally, left out are less active bands that don't do much other than update their Web site. You'll find no mention of ULTRAMAN or VERY METAL, or any other band of St. Louis lore mentioned herein. No disrespect to both of those great bands, but this is about what is going on now.

The city of St. Louis, recently voted "third most dangerous city in the country," is home to the heart of the St. Louis punk and HC scene. This is not to say the suburbs don't have their share of decent places to play, but regular venues in are in the city. There a handful of spaces, one skate-park and a basement that hosts punk and HC shows, in addition to the couple of bars.

MY REGRET

The bands that do the best in St. Louis are bands like BONES BRIGADE, ANNIHILATION TIME, and MUNICIPAL WASTE. Bands with a tinge of rock riffs in their sound do the best among the DIY scene. I could write for days about the package-tour crowd, but then it would be the same scene report from here to New York and then to San Francisco.

BANDS:

Below is a list of bands that regularly play punk/HC shows. There are a lot of solid punk bands around both new and old; THE VULTURES, CONFORMISTS, and THE ARCH are solid bands all playing a variety of punk, ranging from spit-in-your-eye to "What the fuck am I listening to?" stuff. Here's a list of some of the more active bands:

STEP ON IT! plays early-80s hardcore with a new millennium polish to it. It's like a mix between early-00s HC superstars PANIC, but with SUICIDAL thrash parts. They put out their own record, *Speak for Yourself* in '04, which was later pressed on CD by local label, Collective Records, and are following that up with another smoking-fast EP soon.

THE BREAKS have no polish, and shoot out fast hardcore punk reminiscent of LIFE'S HALT and more current-sounding fast HC punk bands. They just released the best Midwest record of 2005 on Firestarter Records, the *Get Saved* EP.

CROSS EXAMINATION plays 80s-style metal/hardcore crossover. Just think of SOD with a big fantasy metal fetish, and a MURPHY'S LAW partying attitude. Just got signed to Deep Six

Records, delighting the INFEST-worshipping band members. The CD will be on Chicago's Organized Crime Records.

THE PUBES are one of the longest-running punk bands in St. Louis, sticking it out for more than five years. They are the rebuttal to retired punks' complaints of "no good punk bands in St. Louis." They play a style like early 80s West Coast punk. Add a sense of humor and you've got a hell of a live band.

CARDIAC ARREST sounds like NEGATIVE FX, but has catch to their short songs. The riffs don't have hooks and the singer has a raw voice, but something about them makes people eat it up like toasted ravioli. Their brand of '82 American hardcore does well in the Midwest.

EATING RATS, hosts of the Slaughterhouse punk basement, provide St. Louis with a near-lethal dose of highly concentrated crust punk! They have riffs that take the listener on a celestial journey…or that may just be the mega bong rips they endorse.

CORBETA CORBATA has a 7" EP out on Collective Records and a prior LP. CORBETA CORBATA sound as if you took SSD's "How Much Art" and added guitar chord progressions that border on epic. This band is full of punks who have been around (This band has also reached the hall of fame by reaching the five-year mark) and plays solid punk. Perfect for those who are well schooled in punk rock history. Zero-percent artsy.

Active bands in St. Louis are in the "old school" punk/hardcore range. A few up-and-coming bands like ROTTING OUT, who plays low-fi hardcore with riffs like FUCKED UP and vocals like NO JUSTICE are really changing the sound of St. Louis hardcore and punk. RESOLVE is a youth crew band putting out an EP soon and MY REGRET is "amazing-core" stuff similar to MODERN LIFE IS WAR and others. SAYONARA is a local 625 Thrash style band with a love for Japanese hardcore; their new 7" is perfect to bomb a hill to.

VENUES:

St. Louis has a number of decent venues for shows. We have the Creepy Crawl, which just surpassed its 8th anniversary. The layout is similar to CBGBs (only smaller) a lot of bands say. This club sits on the fence between corporate "concert clubs" and the DIY venues. It's a good place to see a band like SICK OF IT ALL, THE DWARVES or THE BRIEFS, all who played there recently. It's a bar, so touring bands will get paid.

The Lemp Arts Center, in the shadow of the Anheuser Busch brewery, has been a constant for a few years now in St. Louis. It's a space by definition. The walls are lined with couches for touring bands to sleep on, and local artwork is displayed. Lemo has a reputation for playing host to a majority of the city's noise/art punk bands, but also has seen bands like EMBRACE TODAY or OUTBREAK play. They take 40 percent of the door.

Ramp Riders is a skate/BMX park in a warehouse. It has a small stage and usually a handful of bewildered parents that take their kids to ride bikes. The place has been hosting shows for less than six months, but is a solid venue nestled in an almost-desolate industrial park. They take 20 percent of the door.

A variety of other clubs/bars exist, but none that regularly showcase punk or hardcore shows. Local colleges (there are a lot), halls, and record stores, occasionally serve as venues, but are not regulars.

The biggest shows of the year are Hardcore Halloween, the www.stlpunk.com X-Mas show, and a few hardcore/punk "fests" that take place occasionally.

DISTROS, ART, ZINES, ETC:

There are a few distros that pop up every year or two, but none are going right now. St. Louis had a pretty good hardcore zine,

Speak For Yourself, which put out three issues. *SAP* is a comic book/zine with punk roots that is consistently a good read—check it out at www.wormcomix.com.

Great artists also abound here. St. Louis' punk/hardcore scene is lucky to have some of the city's most prolific artists. It's not uncommon to have an artist's work on the cover of the local alternative weekly *and* some band's demo tape or T-shirt. Dan Zettwoch, Jeff Worm, and Picklehead are three artists with professional gigs who also do punk art. St. Louis really is a DIY scene right now in that sense; there are people here who can do everything to help put our your band or promote your ideas.

There are about 200-300 people who regularly go to DIY shows, but 50 to 60 people is considered a good turnout. There were about 40 people at the DEAD STOP / SET TO EXPLODE show that came through recently and a little more (around 50) at the REGULATIONS show that was here on a Sunday. For the BLACKLISTED / MENTAL crowd, there will be about 50-60 kids at that show when it hits town in a week. Package tour shows draw around 150 people.

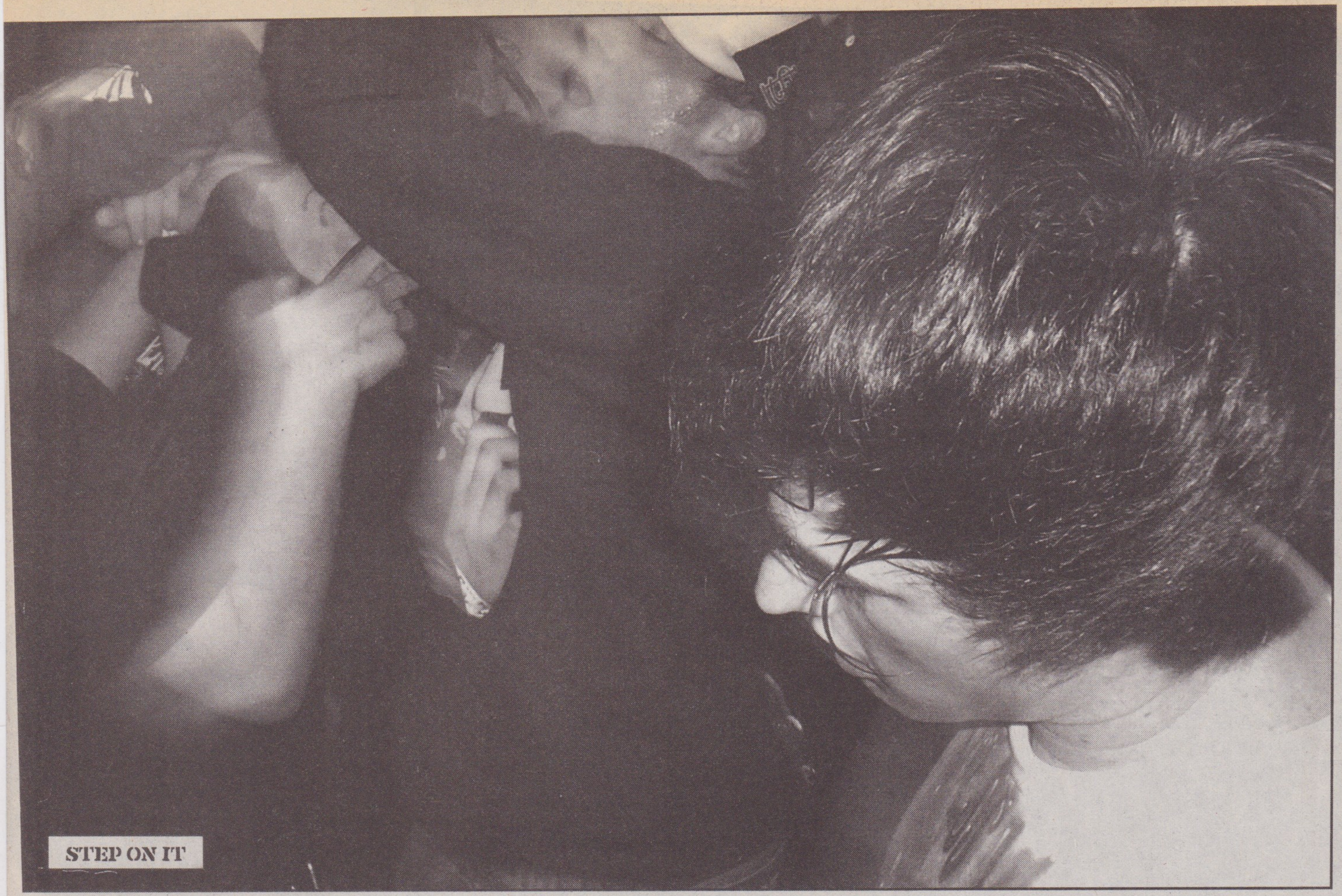
The new scene (it is often described as "young" in other zines) is not as hard or tough as St. Louis of old. Among the hardcore/punk scene, the under-25 crowd is quickly becoming the over-25 crowd. Most punk/HC shows attendees are between 20 and 25, and the ones older or younger fit right in.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION: Chicago, Memphis, Louisville, and Kansas City are all about equally far away (four or five hours), making us a good tour stop but also pretty isolated. It's not like the East Coast where a long drive to a show is an hour or two. I think "the isolation of the Midwest," as I once read it on an East Coast record label's web site, is a good thing.

St. Louis also boasts what I think is the best local punk web site in the country, www.stlpunk.com. While sometimes it seems flooded by user profiles all about teen angst and bad MTV rock, it's creators and administrators have their hearts and minds on a productive punk scene. Best of all, www.stlpunk.com has a prime focus on using the Internet as a tool to aid in real life, not replace it. So there's a ton of show, band, venue and zine info in addition to the MySpace.com-style profiles.

If you're not from STL, visit the site and be jealous. It's *the best* place to go if you want to book a show here, hear any of the aforementioned bands' MP3s, see photos, song reviews, show reviews, artists' work and fliers.

—Nick. All photos by Big Drawz.



STEP ON IT

CARDIAC ARREST

BRIGHTON, UK

Here is another scene / music report from the Brighton/Sussex, UK area. Some bands included here may just have one member that lives down in the south of England, but the scene here seems to be pretty healthy these days with a real mix of bands, promoters, and new kids.

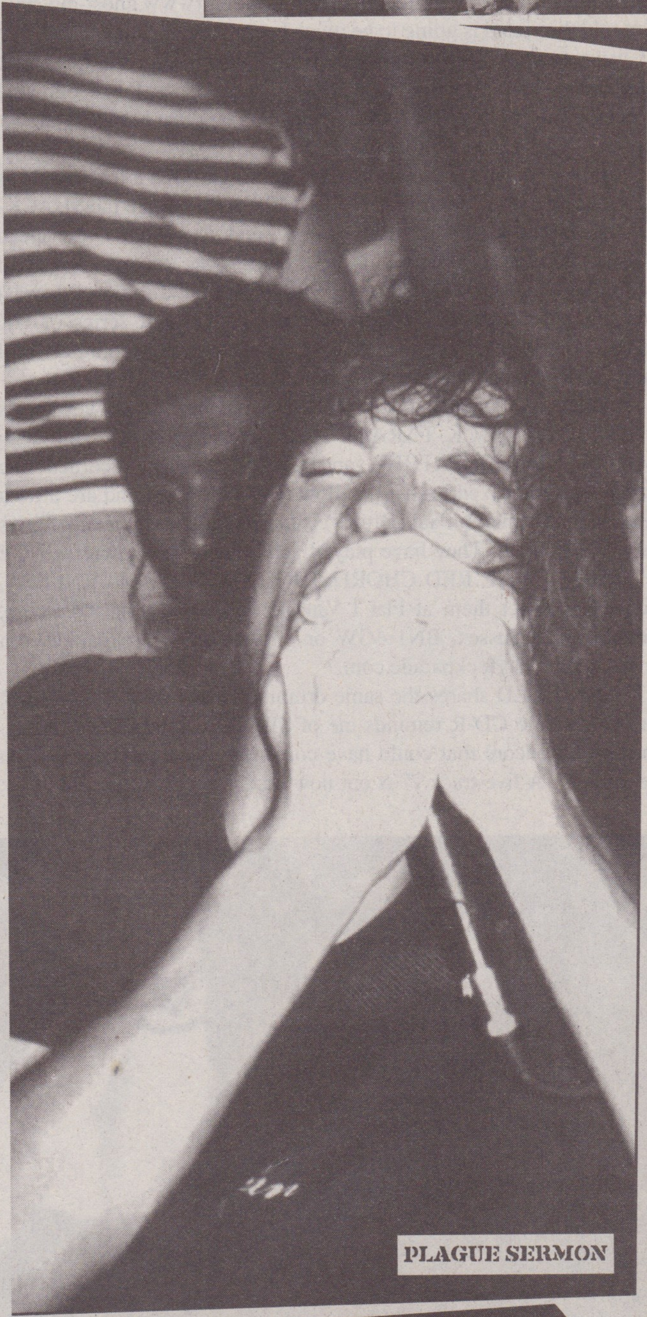
The Punker Bunker still has the best selection of vinyl, CDs, zines, and shirts for you to spend your money on. Also loads of flyers for shows coming up and other punk related stuff: Basement, 34 Sydney Street, Brighton, BN1 4EP. Buz had a few months off putting shows on and is now concentrating on bands he really wants to see. In 2005 he had HARD SKIN, BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT, GROOVIE GHOULIES, CAPDOWN, the APERS, SPOOKEY, the PEACOCKS, and other quality shows. Go to www.punkerbunker.co.uk and see what's going on now.

A local web site / message board www.brightonpunk.co.uk has a bit of history about old punk and hardcore bands from Brighton, everything from SLEEP to MTA to PETTY CRIME. Also if you want to find out about shows, coming up in the future or anything else have a look. They organized a small punk picnic, which ended up with a good turn out and a bit of drunk football, nice. If you're in a band you should leave your link on here so people can check you out.

CONSTANT STATE OF TERROR is a great new band featuring Pete and Neil (ex-MTA) Adam (ex-SEVEN ARROWS IN YOUR BASTARD HEART) Jules (ex-SUBSTANDARD) and Sonny (COMBAT SHOCK), and will appeal to anyone who likes TRAGEDY, POISON IDEA, and DISCHARGE. This bunch has a good mix of UK anarcho punk, Swedish/Japanese HC, and 80s thrash metal. With every show this lot improves, and in my opinion they are one of the best UK acts around right now. Get in touch at jules@mtpfight.fsnet.co.uk or go to their website to download MP3s www.constantstateofterror.com. They have plans to do a few dates over in Finland (take me with you!) and Benelux next year and also record a demo.

Another band that really impressed me at their first show was FALL OF EFRAFA, who is a six-piece cello driven crust/hardcore band, reminding me of GOD SPEED YOUR BLACK EMPEROR meets REMAINS OF THE DAY/FROM ASHES RISE crust punk. Lyrically they take influence from the mythology in the book *Watership Down*. They have plans to record a four-track 7" and play more shows. Get in touch with this bunch at fallofefrafa@yahoo.com. I think this bunch are also going to try and put on a few shows, which is always hard in Brighton with the lack of decent venues, so good luck with that guys.

SEVEN ARROWS IN YOUR BASTARD HEART has Adam from CONSTANT STATE OF TERROR on vocals and a bunch of guys from Southampton; musically TRAPDOOR FUCKING EXIT with brutal MANUMISSION style vocals, lots of ranting between


PLAGUE SERMON

songs from Adam, and they try to give out a lyric sheet when they play. They recorded a demo tape/CD, which came out really good and have played loads of shows all over the UK. Unfortunately they called it a day with their last show at the Bradford 1 in 12. Get in touch at stecollective@hotmail.co.uk for a copy of the demo, www.myspace.com/sevenarrows.

No longer a resident, Ralf of Opiate records moved away from Brighton back to Holland and I know people here wish him all the best. He's a really top guy who gave Brighton some top shows. Look out for his new project/band, there are lots of cool people involved and I'm sure they'll be great.

ABANDON SHIP finally got their split 7" out with the PERMANENT from London. I don't think the sound quality came out as they wanted, but the packaging looks great. They are an awesome live band and always give a great live show, look out for their 6-track, 1-sided 12" on Ghost City records from London (www.ghost-city.net). I'm told the sound is going to be much better abandonship@mail.com or listen to them at www.myspace.com/abandonship. They seem to play out of town quite a bit so if you get a chance I'd recommend checking this lot out. Rob (vocals) also puts on great hardcore shows, which always get good turnouts.

Not from down south, but Jack (London) gave me a few details as he's putting out the ABANDON SHIP 12". Also out are the SHACKLE ME NOT/DEATHSKULLS split 7" and *The Bitter Days* ahead UK hardcore/punk comp on his label Ghost City Records. Next will be the DEATHSKULLS LP (split with Atrocity Exhibition Records) and other treasures will follow including a 7" split series of UK bands. For more info contact Jack at jack@scumville.co.uk or snail mail: 12 Richmond Avenue, Islington, London, N1 0NF, UK.

Another new band that I missed live, but hear was awesome is RAINY DAY FUCK PARADE who mixes up heavy shit *a la* BOTCH, STARKWEATHER, and URANUS. They recorded five tracks that got mixed by Kurt Ballow (CONVERGE) and are after a label to put them out. Paul (Drums) is in Brighton with the other guys living in London. They have played some good shows with SINCE BY MAN, LACK, RED CHORD, HIGH ON FIRE, and KYLESA. You can contact them at Flat 1 Vantage Point, New England House, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 4GW or info@rainydayfuckparade.com or www.rainydayfuckparade.com.

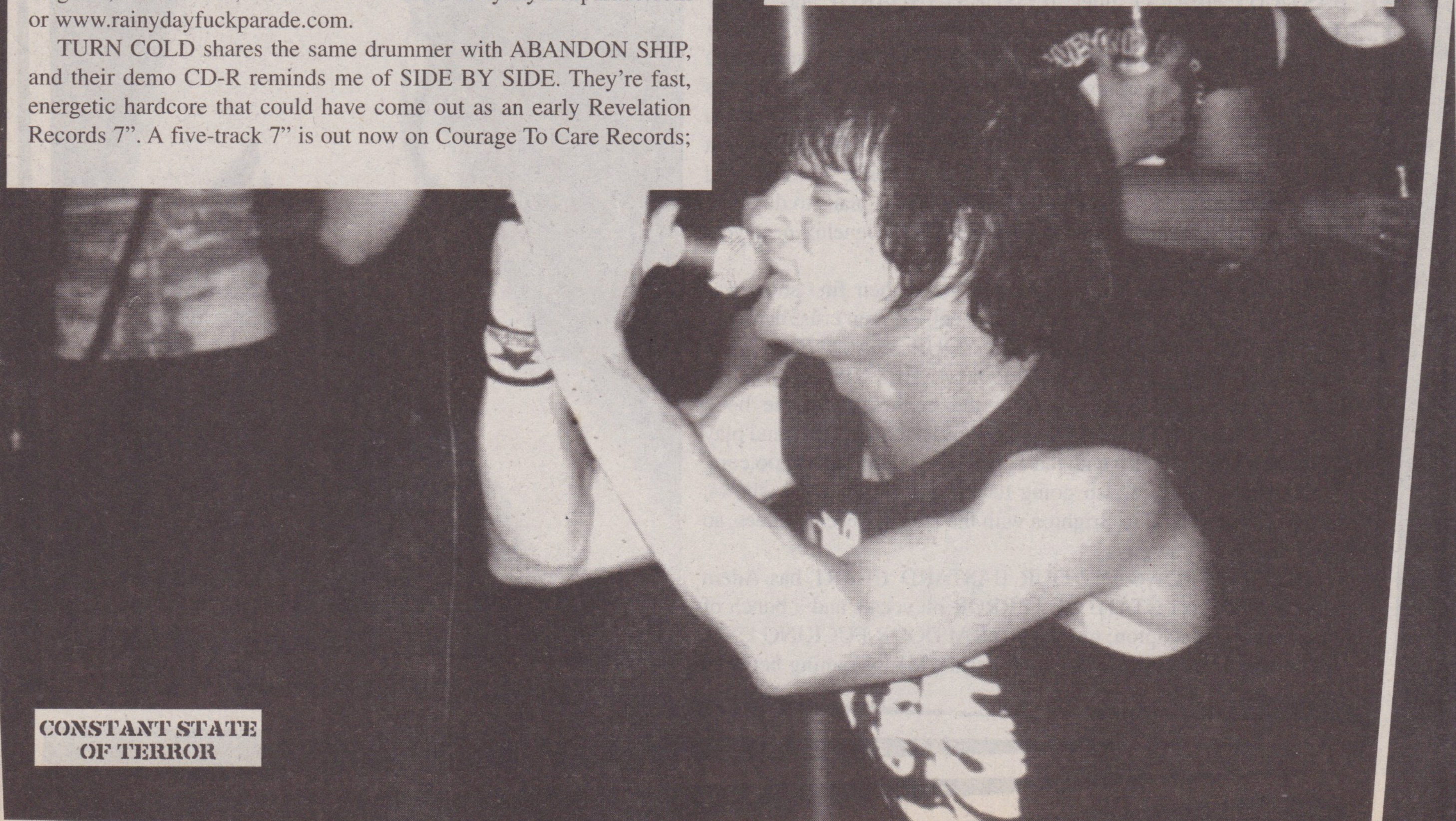
TURN COLD shares the same drummer with ABANDON SHIP, and their demo CD-R reminds me of SIDE BY SIDE. They're fast, energetic hardcore that could have come out as an early Revelation Records 7". A five-track 7" is out now on Courage To Care Records; turncold@hotmail.com. They have some dates lined up and I'm told the 7" is selling fast so act quick if you want one. They just did a few dates with ABANDON SHIP, which I hear were a lot of fun.

SLAUGHTERHOUSE 57 has recorded for a split 7" with Eastbourne's HATEBALL. Last year they sorted out a UK tour with DISCO VOLANTE (www.discovolante.nu – check out their awesome debut CD) from Sweden that went really well. They have had Christmas shows in Leeds and New Year shows in Bristol. The tour went so well that DISCO VOLANTE is coming back for a week in February and then SLAUGHTERHOUSE will go back with them for a week in Sweden. Then next they're heading over to Sweden's Bad Taste Records to record their debut LP. They also plan a split 7" with DISCO VOLANTE where each band covers the others' song. The last info I have on this lot is their drummer Jez may be moving to Nottingham, and I wish him all the best if that turns out to be the case. Go to www.slaughterhouse57.co.uk for all band info/contact.

ARCHITECTS play brutal, technical metal-core, if your thing is BOTCH or CONVERGE you'll probably dig this bunch, they have a two-song demo and a mini LP coming out on In At The Deep End Records next year. Check these guys out at www.myspace.com/architects666 or get in touch at xxminus@hotmail.com. They have just done a few dates with BEECHER and JR EWING in the UK.

AKEHURST is a melodic hardcore band, maybe GRADE meets SOMEHOW HOLLOW meets BOYS NIGHT OUT. This lot seems to have a huge following, and share members with TURN COLD and ONCE OVER. They should have a demo out any day now, check them out at www.myspace.com/akehurst or get in touch at www.akehurstmusic.com for anything else.

THE STRUGGLE plays fast pissed off style hardcore, influenced by JUDGE, TERROR, BLACKLISTED, and NO WARNING. They have been playing loads of the hardcore shows in town. They have a demo available and hope to have a 7" out soon with newer material. Contact this bunch at



tnpmosh@hotmail.com or www.myspace.com/tnp

Another band with members of AKEHURST and THE STRUGGLE is NERVOUS WRECK, who plays fast pissed off hardcore like SHARK ATTACK, OUTBREAK, or XFILESX. Their demo tape should be available by the time you read this. Go to www.myspace.com/nervouswreckhc or check out the Dead and Gone message board as this lots name keeps popping up.

THE PLAGUE SERMON is ex-CREEPER and FRIGHT AND WALL OF DENIAL kids playing chaotic, doom-laden, epic screamo. If you like stuff on Level Plane you may like this. Fans of NEIL PERRY and ENVY will dig this lot, the demo is available at www.plaguesermon.com and a split 7" with GHOST OF A THOUSAND and a self released 7" to follow shortly after. A UK tour should happen at some point as well. Contact at theplaguesermon@hotmail.com or check out www.myspace.com/theplaguesermon

COMBAT SHOCK has been busy playing shows in the UK, stand out shows being London at Active Slaughter's (RIP) last ever show (A benefit for SHAC) and the Wasted Festival in Morecambe. They're sorting out a tour of Bulgaria in 2006 and releasing their five-song *T.W.A.T* session on Weird Records, which will be a five-way split with other bands from the scene. Then after that a split release with Canada's EXPUGE. And if all goes to plan a new LP is in the pipeline. Their website is www.combatshock.co.uk and check out www.myspace.com/combat2shock. They just got a new bass player, the mighty Paul from ANAL BEARD (RIP)

BLOOD RED SHOES features Steve from CAT ON FORM; they are a girl/boy two piece, that sound like they should be on the Slaampt record label. If you're into RED MONKEY you should check these guys out. They have a 7" out on Jonson Family Records and can be visited at www.catonform.co.uk/bloodredshoes or write 19 New England Rd, Brighton, BN1 3TU, UK.

Now the MOCK HEROIC only has one member living in Brighton, but that's good enough for me. They have played many shows in Europe, including shows in England and Scotland. I hear them compared to Gravity style hardcore. Fans of PALATKA will be into these guys. They have a 7" out and have tracks on a four-way split LP (with A FINE BOAT THAT COFFIN, AM I DEAD YET?, and UTARID) both released on Nimbus in Germany, and are available from wingwalkrecords@hotmail.com future plans is to record a full-length LP and more touring across Europe and a track on the protest emo comp.

MANACLE has people out of END THE AGONY, ex-CAT ON FORM, BUMBAG, YELP OF SORB, LEPPARD LEG, PROJECTIONS, THE MOCK HEROIC, POLLY SHANG QUAN BAND, ex-CREEPER AND FRIGHT, ABANDON SHIP and seems to be a bit quiet right now. They did a small tour with Ralf Opiate on vocals and that sounded all very messy and improvised. Due to the other band commitments this lot find it hard to practice but hope to sort that out in the near future, their lyrics are more overtly political than other projects with veganism being a key subject. As they seem to be Brighton's very own super group I really hope they sort this project out (and I want to witness the live experience).

END OF AGONY is a great new band that people into the Slap-A-Ham label will be into, influenced by GRIEF, OFF MINOR, STILL LIFE, VICTOR JARA, and generally feeling awful and wanting to give everything they have to fight it. If you like INFEST, check these guys out. For a two-piece they have some crushing tunes. You can contact freehorses@hotmail.com or server4.hxcmp3.com/bands/31446/index.php.

Dan from END OF AGONY is also in YELP OF SORDS—it's just him and his acoustic guitar playing scrappy and very messy songs, and trying his

7 ARROWS IN YOUR BASTARD HEART

best to keep it all together. Dan books and plays DIY shows all over the UK and is hoping next year to go to America, Malaysia, and various parts of Europe. He has some tracks recorded but needs someone with money and a golden heart to put them out. Go to yos.ai-em.net or write to freehorses@hotmail.com or to contact him for a demo.

RANDOM HEROES has a new CD out on Killer Records, which is available from www.myspace/randomheroesuk. They had a good one-week tour around the UK and go off again soon with SPOOKEY from Japan. They have plans to put out a 7" and a European tour in 2006.

ONCE OVER has their debut CD out on Killer Ska Records, and has a mix of ska-core, pop punk, and metal. This lot seem to always go down well live and are a real crowd pleaser. They have lots of energy and are great fun. You can find out more at www.onceovermusic.co.uk or www.myspace.com/onceover or contact Killer Ska Records: sharon@jellybaby.org.uk, www.skawars.co.uk, Immediate Clothing, 34 Sydney Street, Brighton, BN1 4EP. I guess if you like Asian Man Records stuff, you'll probably dig these guys.

Now if FLAT PIG was any more underground they'd be buried, if they were any older they'd be dug up…like fossils. They are working on a new song, which is a tribute to John Peel. Some other material is being worked on, then possibly another tour in Europe to see old friends. Everything comes out on Deadfly Records, but Deadfly doesn't exist…an enigma. They have never had an "official" release (except for the collaboration with Brian James). There is a four-track 7" called *Wasted* put out by the band themselves: www.flatpig.com or Studio 284, 284 Madeira Drive, Brighton. Or get in touch daveflatpig@genie.co.uk

Not from Brighton, but they play over this way are WHOLE IN THE HEAD, who has folks out of Haywire, Chinapple punks, MINUTE MANIFESTO and plays raging UK thrash with a DROP DEAD style assault. This mob is from Southampton and have a seven-track demo available on tape & CD. Check them out at www.wholeinthehead.co.uk or get in touch nath@wholeinthehead.co.uk or write; Whole In The Head c/o Box Sabs, October Books, 243 Portswood Rd, Southampton, SO17 2NG.

Promoter wise, Cut Throat Promotions has put on shows by the RITES, VITAMIN X, BONES BRIGADE, TURN COLD and local hardcore bands. Their shows always have a good turn out and lots of dancing, for info on shows mail jenimayhem@hotmail.com or look at the Dead and Gone message board for future shows.

Special Kids Promotions deals with the emo, indie and screamo shows. So far they've had shows by LOUISE CYPHRE, RAEIN, and a bunch of ex-BRAID / CAP N JAZZ folks new projects. Get in touch for future shows at specialkidspromos@hotmail.com

Matt & Bill from SLAUGHTERHOUSE 57 have sorted out a few dates for bands from Sweden and the DISCO VOLANTE tour. Fingers crossed (hint, hint)—if SKITSYSTEM comes over he'll be giving them a show in Brighton. SH57 promotions is doing regular shows now with acts like WHOLE IN THE HEAD, FROM PLAN TO PROGRESS, FUCKED UP and possibly the VARUKERS. Get in touch with Matt at sovosmohikan@yahoo.co.uk for shows he's got in the future.

Nascent puts on the fashion punk shows, THE OATH, THE PANTHERS, LOCUST, YEAR FUTURE type stuff, check out the collective message board for up and coming shows or mail nascentzine@hotmail.com.

ABANDON SHIP

And not forgetting Joff, who did a great job by putting on the BORN/DEAD, RESTARTS, CONSTANT STATE OF TERROR show, which was awesome and my favourite show in Brighton this year so far.

Wise Up is a distro, gig, and zine promotion run by Nat and Menna, and is trying to inject no profit, no drama, and just fun into the local hardcore community. Influenced by 80s DIY, 90s revival, and 00s reunions. Nat put out a free zine with a comp CD just as an intro. They are gonna have a distro with a mix of classic hardcore records with the best of the newer bands. Find out more www.myspace.com/wiseuphc or get in touch wiseuphc@gmail.com. A new zine should follow shortly.

Zonked issue eight came out with interviews with Joey Shithead and SUNPOWER, a SEEIN RED UK tour report, and Pete's usual and interesting travel stories. I'm told issue nine will have interviews with FOUR LETTER WORD, THE OBSERVERS, SLAUGHTERHOUSE 57 and cycling and travel stories. Send anything for review to Pete Craven, 46 Ashford Road, Brighton, BN1 6LJ or pete@zonked.fsnet.co.uk

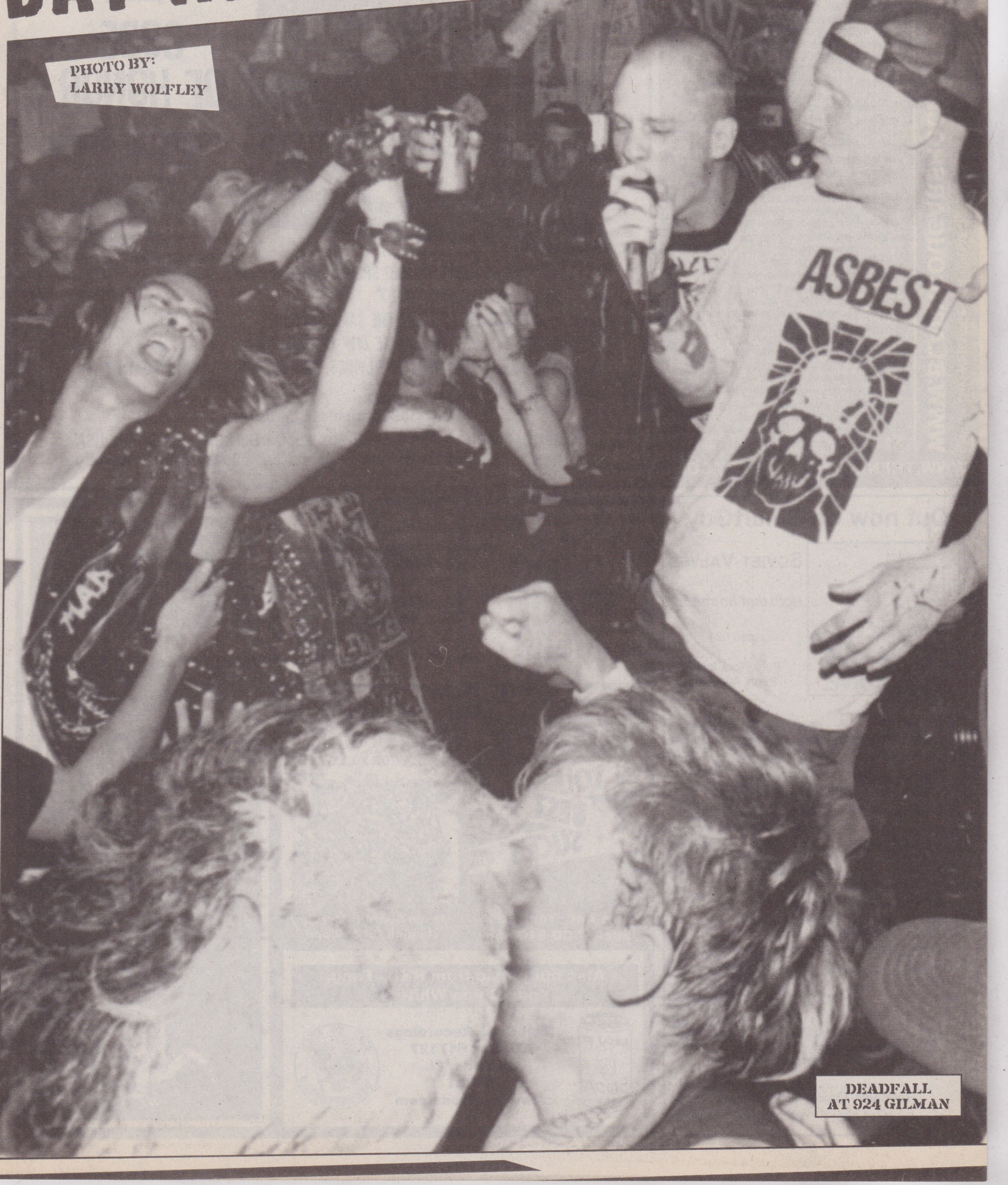
Anymore info email me at spudutat@hotmail.com and send me (sell me!) the Evergreen 12"/split 7", Fucked Up – Looking for gold 12", Young Wasteners – LP, Hul - LP, and the Moss Icon split 12" (pretty please).

And every mix tape should have Tragedy "The Ending Fight" and Nema "Estate," because those two songs do it for me every time…

Scene report and photos by Darren Bourne.

BAY AREA SCENE PHOTOS

PHOTO BY:
LARRY WOLFLEY



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Feb 05th - Milwaukee, WI - Venue TBC
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Feb 07th - Grand Rapids, MI - The DAAC
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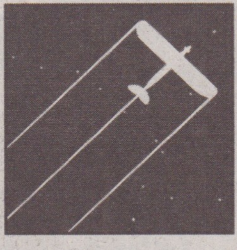

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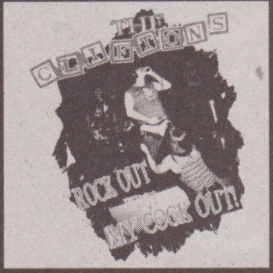

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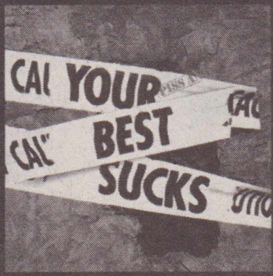

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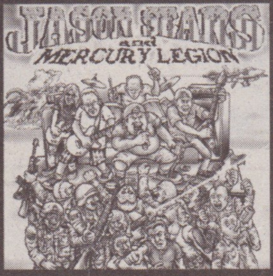
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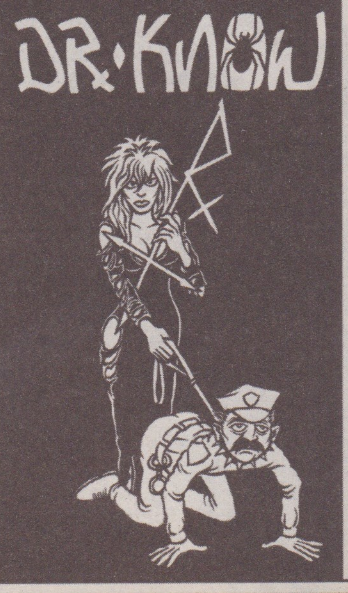


the PEDESTRIANS

Last July, Chicago's Pedestrians took a trip down to Austin, Texas to record their first LP and enjoy the hot weather. It was a busy week of not only recording but playing shows and hanging out, but one evening toward the end of their stay we managed to fit in this interview before heading off to see Mission of Burma at Emo's. To date, they have released a demo (Fall 2004), a 7" on Southkore Records (Spring 2005), and the just released Future Shock LP/CD on their own Residue Records & Criminal IQ. All of these releases are worth picking up and spending some time with. Interview by Dave Hyde & Mike Robinson, photos by Chris Anderson.

MRR: Some of you guys used to be in the band Dead Reckoning. How did that band transition into the Pedestrians?

Jordan: Sloppily. There are three of us from that band—David, Cissie, and me. We played together, put out a rough four-track demo, and played a bunch of shows. We recorded a 7" and our guitar player quit like, two or three weeks after that so we never released it. Then we found Brad and we changed the name. We play one Dead Reckoning song.

David: And it was a song that never got recorded.

Jordan: Yeah, we played it at one show, but I don't think I even had half the lyrics.

MRR: What song?

Jordan: "In the End."

David: There was actually another song, but we don't really do it any more.

Jordan: "Cross the Line."

MRR: So why "The Pedestrians"? Why that band name?

Jordan: Cissie, you have to answer that question.

Cissie: I don't know.

MRR: Really? Was it because it doesn't sound like every other punk band, or is there a meaning? There's got to be some reason for it.

Jordan: Because she doesn't have a car.

Cissie: I can't even drive. It brings about a vision of the city, of city life.

Jordan: Once we became "The Pedestrians" I'd start to notice the signs you'd see: "crossing pedestrians," "yield to..." I kind of like the fact that it's all encompassing.

MRR: Besides Dead Reckoning, were all of you guys in bands before?

Jordan: Yeah, we were: Systemic Infection for David; New Granada for Cissie. I was in Dearborn SS; Brad was in Trepan Nation and the Strike.

MRR: So you've all been active in the Chicago punk scene for a while, and as an outsider who doesn't live in Chicago, it seems to me that there are a lot of bands starting to get noticed outside of the town.

Brad: Really? You're saying there's a bunch of bands getting noticed outside of Chicago?

MRR: At least by me. Are people in Chicago feeding off of each other right now, saying, "I want to start a band"?

Cissie: That sort of happens.

Jordan: Everyone's band is very different. When I think of most scenes where someone starts a band and people are like, "I want to be in that kind of band" and you get all these copycat bands. But in Chicago everyone sounds completely different.

Brad: Yeah, and it leads to some very diverse shows.

MRR: That was the other thing I noticed: that there are not only a lot of good bands in Chicago, but a lot of good bands that don't sound the same. Do those bands end up playing together or do they section themselves off?

Jordan: If someone's adventurous they'll try to put the garage rock scene with the more crusty bands.

Cissie: Like how you were at that show where the Tyrades played with Força Macabra.

Jordan: And that was on the Southside, too. There are definitely a lot of areas where it mixes up, but also a lot of bands that play bars or stay to one side of the city or whatever. It's better than it's been in a long time.

MRR: Do you feel you cross over into the different scenes?

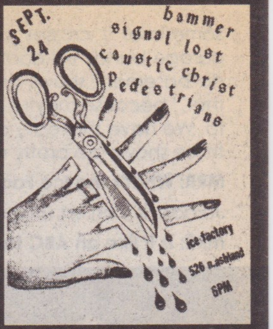
Jordan: Kind of, sort of, a little bit.

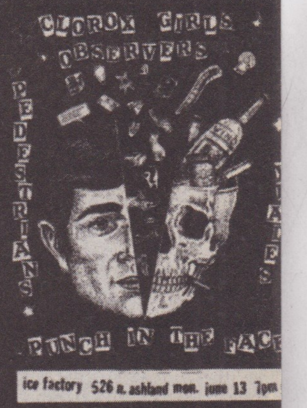
MRR: Do you even feel that the so-called scene boundaries are something that you're cognizant of?

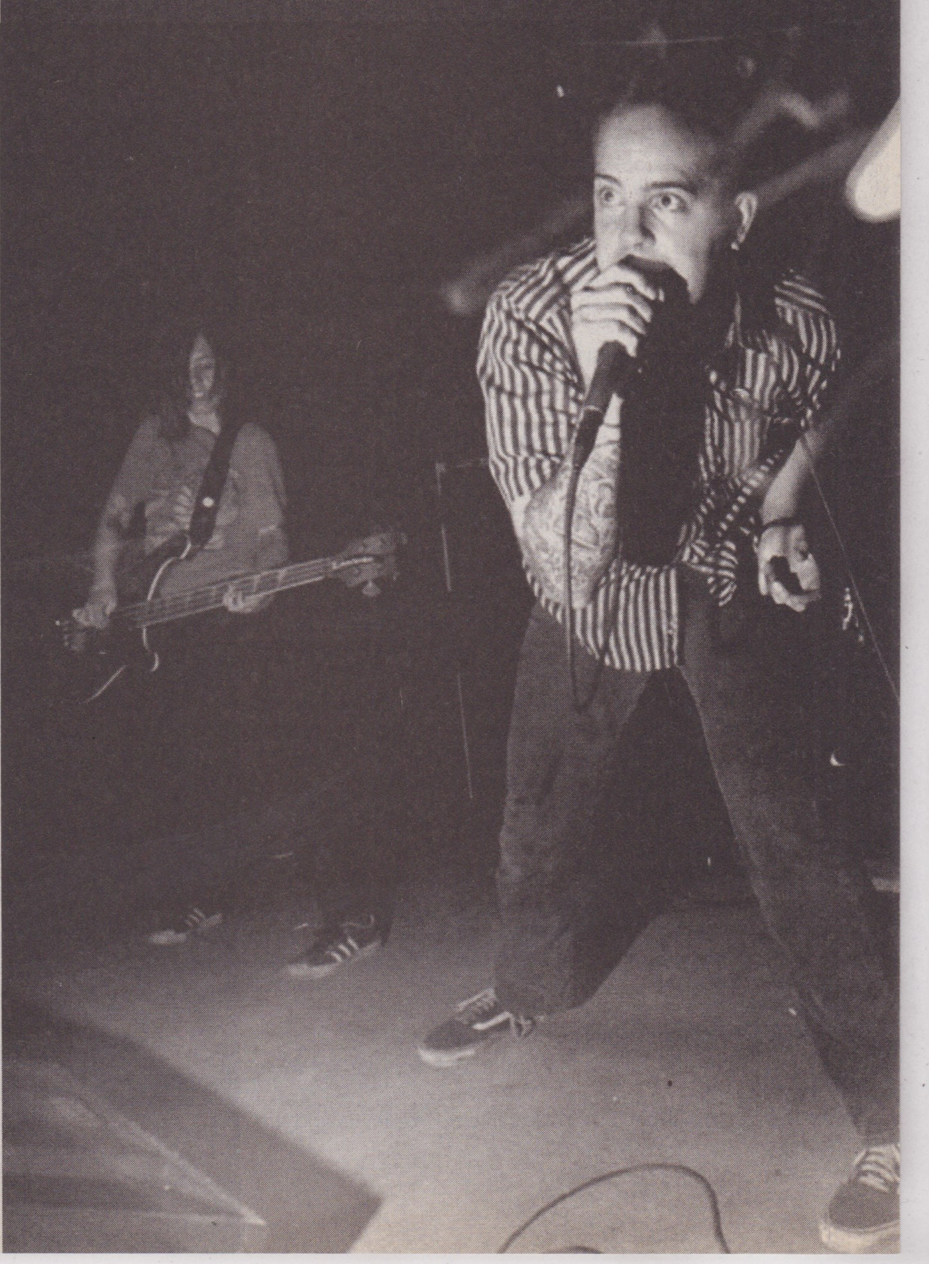
Jordan: I think there are always going to be things sectioned off in punk rock to an extent. Like if you have a band that plays a lot of bars they won't have many 18-year old fans, since they can't [get into the bars] to see their shows. So there's automatically that separation because of ages. We play a lot of basements and stuff, so when we play bar shows they're always fun.

David: There are lots of punk bands in Chicago that are doing shows in places like the Empty Bottle and we're not in that loop at all. Shows there haven't even come up; no one's asked us to play there.

Jordan: There're definitely a lot of cool people that are friends with people in one scene and sometimes it crosses over.







Sometimes it crosses over and sometimes it doesn't. A lot of garage bands will come up to people who do DIY shows, who do basement shows and be like, "We want to play shows like that," because they're missing all these kids who they don't play to. We have this really cool space, The Ice Factory, and a lot of those shows are pretty mixed up.

MRR: What's the Ice Factory?

Jordan: It's an art space on Ashland.

MRR: Is it like an ABC No Rio thing?

Cissie: No, it's illegal. There's a small stage and they usually sell beer there.

Jordan: They'll have a couple of kegs. They've done a lot of shows where they've let punk bands play there. Basically there was a big hole after the Fireside closed.

David: That's what I was going to say.

Jordan: So it kind of picked up that for that size show.

Brad: It's not as big as Fireside. I think when Fireside closed it sectioned off the scene even more. The Fireside did shows for a lot of different genres.

Jordan: It got really bad and it was difficult to do shows there.

MRR: So after that was it like half the kids went to bars and the other half to basements?

Brad: I think a bunch of them just stayed out in the suburbs because I don't know where half the kids went. The Fireside used to hold like 400 people, and you never get that many people out anymore unless it's a big bar show. I'm just wondering where they are.

MRR: You do shows at your house, right Cissie?

Cissie: The house I just moved out of has shows.

MRR: When I think of Chicago, I think of house shows, I think of row houses and stuff like that. How does that work out with the neighbors?

Cissie: It's a real house, not connected to anything, and it's not that loud outside. On one side of us is a crack house that's been shut down, so there's nobody there. On the other side, the guy's really nice and he's even come over to a couple shows.

Jordan: The city tells you what they get busted for, so there's been all this cardboard over the window that says "busted city of Chicago: drug house."

Cissie: So, yeah, the cops never show up or anything and that house has been having shows for at least four or five years. Bands have been practicing there for almost ten years.

Jordan: It's a good place for a basement show. It's especially easy for us because we practice there, so we just turn our equipment around and play.

MRR: How long have you guys been playing together?

Cissie: We started practicing in August 2003 and our first show was February.

Brad: No, our first show was in December, I believe, and we with our first show for sure.

MRR: So you recorded your demo like 6 months after your first show?

Brad: Not even. It was April. [*Arguments about when it was*].

MRR: And after that how long until you recorded the 7"?

Cissie: We recorded the 7" in October and we got it the day before our tour.

Jordan: We had to spray-paint covers the weekend before we left because the covers weren't done.

Brad: Then we had to punch holes [when the real covers came in].

MRR: Why are there holes in the cover of your record?

David: We did it because Cissie had access to a die-cutter.

Cissie: We got to cut each hole individually. Every single one has been touched by the Pedestrians.

Jordan: The people who put out the 7" are Southkore. They're a local label. They put out a couple of 7"s pretty quick.

MRR: Is it all Chicago bands?

Cissie: Mostly Southside. We're the first Northside band, and we're the first white band, so they decided to put it on white vinyl. (*laughter*) It's true!

David: Everybody that is involved in that label is so deeply involved in the scene—it's a collective, not a label, with six people involved—everyone's either singing in bands or doing things.

MRR: How come you guys decided to record in Texas?

Cissie: Austin loves us! Stan offered to record the record.

Brad: [Chicago is] kind of at a weird point right now, where if you want to record with someone who listens to your kind of music there aren't a lot of options. Kris does really good work, he just has an eight-track, so it's kind of more of a demo thing.

Jordan: You can go to other studios, too, but then you have to pay more money

Brad: More like $50/hour.

Jordan: We wanted to go out and do a little tour, and when Stan brought this up to us we were like, this would be awesome. So we talked about doing some shows in Austin, and a couple more on the way down. It's been great.

MRR: Where did you play on the way down?

Jordan: We played St. Louis at the Slaughterhouse. They gave us free pizza. I drank, I love the Schlitz. "Step up to a Schlitz"...I stepped up several times. Our first show in Texas we're getting free food and beer. I'm like, 'this is gonna be a great week!' That was Denton.

Brad: We played the record store [Sound on Sound], which was one of the best shows we've played so far.

MRR: How long did you take to record the album?

Brad: Three days to record it, one to mix.

MRR: What's going to happen with that recording? Are you putting it out yourselves?

Cissie: I'm going to put out the LP.

Jordan: Criminal IQ is putting the CD out. They seemed interested and I think it would be cool. Darius does a radio show with our friend Miriam which is cool because he plays all sorts of stuff.

MRR: The thing about you guys is that, Jordan, I usually can't tell if you want to

fight me or fuck me when you're singing.

[*Laughter*]

Jordan: Probably both! Nah, I'd rather fuck.

Brad: Jordan needs people to be moving around. He can't play to a room full of people who are standing around.

Jordan: No I don't. They can stand there.

Brad: You're gonna violate them! Take that out. But you are going to run out there and start some shit.

MRR: Did you have a set plan of what you wanted to sound like when you started?

Cissie: We never sat down and said, "We want to sound like this" but it worked itself out.

David: I remember it as a long list of don'ts, not so much as a long list of do's. Because most of us were in Dead Reckoning, that band worked out a lot of kinks insofar as how we functioned together. Brad's contribution has changed it and we've evolved.

MRR: I noticed you don't ever play any covers.

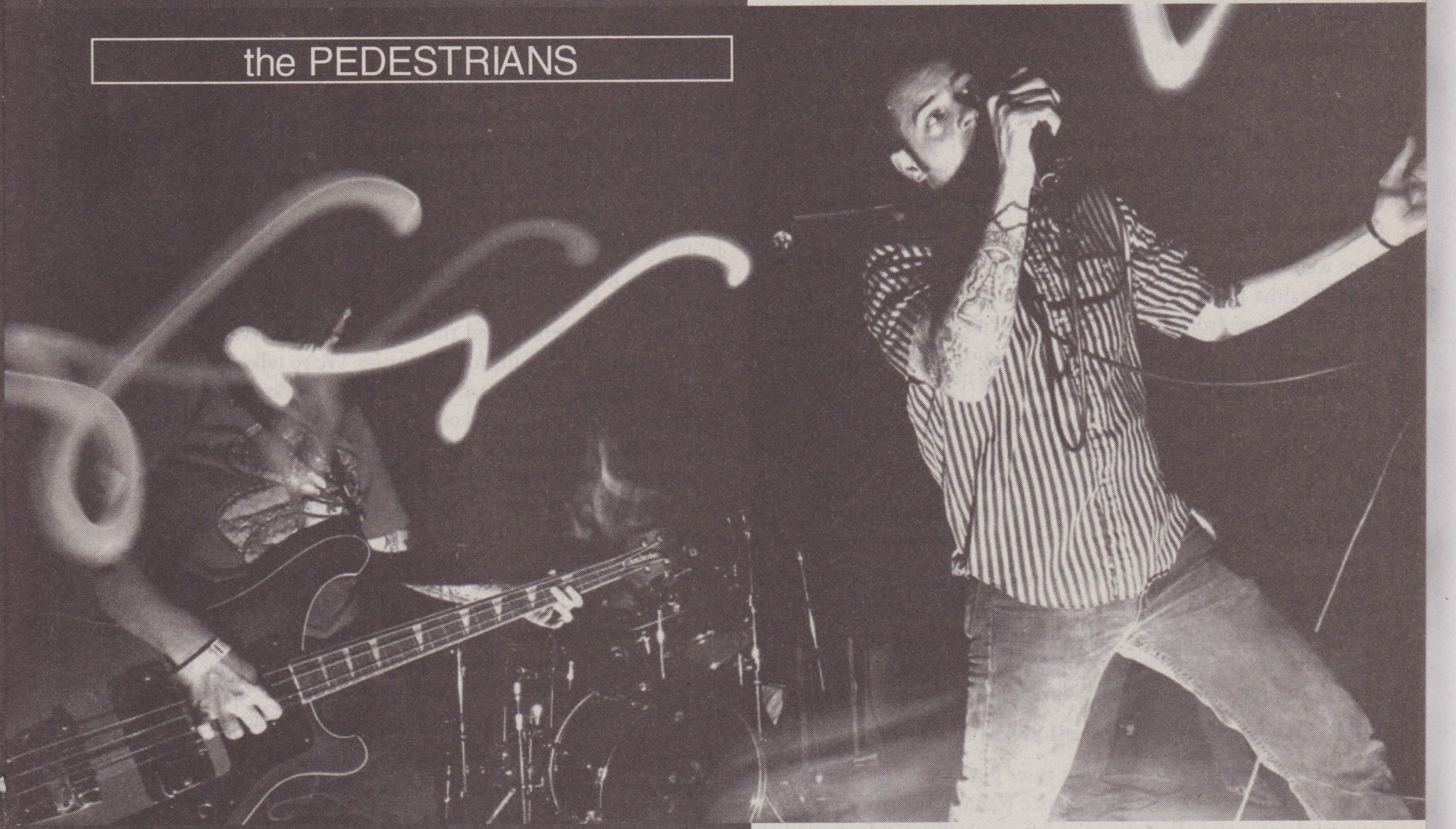
Jordan: We get asked that, which is kind of weird. I like the Zero Boys, and I'd love to play their music like they did, because they're fucking awesome, but I'm not going to. Your music should stand on your own.

Cissie: I've found that in bands, you just don't put the same amount of energy into it as you do your own songs.

MRR: How much do you end up putting into Pedestrians songs, or do they kind of write themselves at this point because you know each other so well?

Cissie: Usually David and I write the basic songs or come in with parts, and we kind of work on it as a band.

the PEDESTRIANS



Jordan: I do all the lyrics and figure out how they'll fit.

MRR: Have you evolved as a lyricist?

[*Laughter erupts*]

Brad: He's still talking about the same shit he always has.

MRR: And what shit is that?

Jordan: I don't know.

MRR: Why are you so angry?

Jordan: I'm not angry. I'm a lover not a hater.

Cissie: Well you're obviously singing about…

MRR: You're evading the question.

Cissie: Yeah!

MRR: What's motivating the lyrics that you're writing if not anger?

Jordan: Well, I'm a very angry person. [*laughter*] There's stuff that just makes you mad, constantly, all the time. There are a lot of dumb people in the world and there's a lot of fucked up shit. All of the time.

[*Applause*]

Cissie: That's horrible!

Jordan: I've worked at a job six years now, and I haven't gotten a raise in four. That's like one little thing of how you feel like…then you see people making lots of money and driving nice cars, and you're having war and shit. What the fuck is wrong with the world, it's just completely absurd!

MRR: So no one else contributes to the lyrics.

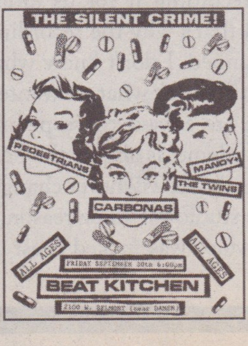
Jordan: To be honest, I couldn't be in a band if I couldn't write the lyrics as a singer. I don't mind if people are like, "hey I have an idea for a song that we can talk about."

MRR: I heard extra vocals on one of your songs on the LP. How did Ashley [from Signal Lost] come into recording with you guys?

Brad: I was really into Signal Lost when I watched them and started thinking about it.

Jordan: Then Brad mentioned it and we all thought it would be cool if she did the chorus to a song.

MRR: What are your future plans? So far you've gone east and you've toured down here. Are you going to try to go to the West Coast or Southeast or anything?



Cissie: I'd really like to tour everywhere.

Brad: I'd really like to get out for more than eight or nine days.

MRR: How come you've only gone out on short tours? People's work schedules?

Cissie: When we did the East Coast thing, David was still in grad school, so we could only go on his break. And this trip [to Texas] was just to record. Hopefully in the spring we'll be able to do a longer tour.

ENDSTAND

I remember seeing one of the first Endstand shows ever years ago and they blew me away. I didn't know anything about the band before the show, but I was surely hooked then, and demanded to have a demo (that wasn't even recorded yet). The energy they had on stage, the feeling of sincerity, and the fact that they really seemed to enjoy themselves were the things that made me interested in Endstand. Since then I've seen them about three million times and they still have that same energy every single time they play. I know I can't send that energy to you in this interview, but at least I can try. One day you'll see them yourself. If you haven't already—you should!!! Interview by Markku H.

MRR: When did you start the band?

Janne: I think it was early 1996, around February or March. We were all unemployed and had really nothing better to do at the time. We were living in small town called Riihimäki, and there was nothing to do. That's where it started. Mika, our guitar player, and Jani, our first drummer, started the band. They just played with each other and I think they ended up sounding very different from what they actually tried to sound like.

They wanted to try to play a mix between early Refused stuff with Rage Against the Machine thrown in: so some metallic hardcore with the groove from RATM. But it didn't sound like that at all, but that's what happens when people who don't know anything about playing try to sound something they like.

They managed to get few songs together anyway. I guess it was not too much fun to play with just two of them, so they asked me and Joel to join the band. I think that was about a month after they started. We rehearsed six months or so and then started to play some local shows.

We've always practiced a lot. Even in the beginning we rehearsed at least five times a week. We really didn't have anything else to do since we were unemployed and there was nothing else we wanted to do. That might have something to do to the fact that we were quite tight pretty early on. Nowadays it all just comes naturally.

MRR: So when did you release that first demo?

Janne: I think had done only about three gigs before we recorded it. It was recorded at our friends practice room with a very primitive four-track recorder. The guy who was recording it for us didn't really know how to use the recorder and that's why the recording sounded way different than what was planned. I don't know what happened there during the recordings, but it wasn't what we wanted it to be—of course not—but still, there are always those people who think that the first recording, or first demo, is always the best the band has ever done, no matter what, and that will never change. We were staying quite a long time in the studio for some reason. I think it took about a week to do it. My voice was fucked most of the time, since I had really bad flu at the time. It wasn't easy to do. We had all kinds of stupid problems there. I don't really want to even listen that demo nowadays.

MRR: Well, I like it. I like the raw sound it has. Did you have some kind of visions for the band since the day one? Would you have believed that the band would still be going strong 2005?

Janne: No way! We didn't think anything like that. We were very thrilled to get to do the shows. We started to get more and more gigs after each show; that was very exciting to us—and surprising. We wouldn't have believed that would happen. We've always had lots of dreams and plans for the future. We've talked about dreams among the band members and then we worked to try to make them real. When we've accomplished one dream we always have a new dream planned already: be it a first record release, first tour, or whatever. So far we've toured Europe very-fucking-many times and we've been to Japan too. That was really great experience for all of us.

We're always planning for something new. When we had that nine-week long European tour—which is very fucking long time to be on the road—we were already planning our next tour. It's that need to get something done, to keep it all going, and go forward all the time. Not to just wait something to come your way, it may never come if you don't work and try to make your dreams happen.

We've also released a stack of records so far and some people have even bought our records, which is amazing.

I think right now we have a dream that we'd like to do a US tour. We've been playing with many bands from the US and some of them have said that we should do a US tour and that's where we got the idea. We feel that we should maybe release something there before we go. I don't think many people know us there at all yet.

So anyway, after we'd been doing gigs only about six months we got a chance to do some shows in Belgium the next summer. That was the summer of 1997. A Finnish friend was living there at the time and he knew the organizers of the festival, Ieper festival.

They asked a Finnish band to come to the festival, and for some odd reason, our friend mentioned our name. They took us to the festivals and then I got few shows for us around the festivals. That was our first tour. It lasted about two weeks and we only had five or six gigs. We had an old Ford Sierra and there were six people in the car and all the guitars and records and so on. It was really fucking crowded. We were supposed to have a real van for the tour, but a day before we were supposed to leave we got information that the van was broken. We didn't want to cancel the tour, since we were given the chance to do it. We borrowed a car from a friend's mom—actually this friend, Henkka later became our second drummer—and he was drove us. The drivers took the front seats and the whole band was on the back. It was really tight!!! We were listening to CCR all the fucking time. There was Creedence Clearwater Revival tape stuck in the tape deck and we couldn't get it out, so we were playing that all the time. We didn't want to listen to radio, that was totally shit, so we preferred CCR. Two weeks of CCR is too much, let me tell you. I still remember that hot summer in Europe every time I hear that stupid band.

MRR: Did you have records out for that tour?

Janne: Yes, a few months before that tour we released our first EP, called Tolerance. We had recorded a split 7" with Outlast even before the Tolerance EP, but Outlast had tons of problems with that release and it was late for months, of course, but we finally got that out and so we had records with us on tour. I had about 250 records with me, 125 Tolerance 7" and 125 of the split 7" and I sold all those records at Ieper festivals after our gig. That was amazing. I couldn't believe it at all!! We were totally unknown band there. I don't think anyone had even heard of us before that gig. The gig itself was also unbelievable; we really loved it! We just went to the stage and let it go!! It was a three-day festival and we were played the first night. There were hundreds of people watching us; I hadn't even thought that would be possible for us, ever. At the time Ieper festival was more sincere and honest; now it seems to be just another fashion show. It's still one of the most memorable shows for our band for sure. The rest of the festival we stayed there and watched all those great bands they had that year. We met tons of people there, and the great thing is that we still see all these people at our shows. That's punk. They are all still there, they haven't disappeared anywhere and that's great! That tour was really great. I have tons of great memories from it. It was also very educating for all of us. We learned what touring is all about and what's day-to-day life on tour. I think Henkka had been on tour before with his previous band Fauna. They had a European tour together with Juggling Jugulars, which must have been in 1996 or so.

presley
bastard

PHOTO BY GASPARD MONTAGNE

MRR: When you started to play, not many bands were doing the kind of music you play in Finland. Was it hard to get shows?

Janne: There were a few of those bands that played US influenced hardcore at the time, but still they were not exactly the same style. There was 50x50 and that was really traditional old school stuff but there were only few of them.

MRR: They were entertaining, 50x50.

Janne: Our gigs have always been very fucking energetic and even some of the people who don't listen to any hardcore music have been somehow impressed by our gigs. That's just great. I think that has brought some new audience to us. We made a conscious decision, well at least I did, very early, that I'm going to move around at the stage and not just stand there and do nothing. I don't like to watch bands that just stand there. It's really boring. I don't want to be one of those bands. It's really inspiring to see bands that have something going on there and you can see that the band itself is enjoying the gig. You can't really pretend that you are having fun; it must come from the heart. I know we feel better when we are moving. It all comes from the power of music. It makes you move!!

MRR: What made you interested in punk at the first place?

Janne: My roots are in metal for sure. It all started with KISS, when I was seven or eight years old, around 1982 or 1983. I can't remember how I found KISS. I'd guess some of my friends had tapes or records and that's how I found it. I listened to all these classic bands such as WASP, Mötley Crüe, Twisted Sister and the rest Then maybe around seventh or eighth grade I found some more extreme metal. A friend of mine made me a tape that had the first Cro-Mags LP and the SOD. LP. Those were the first more hardcore records that I really heard. Little by little I started to find more and more hardcore and some punk, bands like Dead Kennedys, Bad Religion, etc. Me and Henkka used to go see tons of gigs at 8-Sali in Lahti. At the time I was listening to tons of metal still, but I got to know more and more punks at those gigs. I also got to know more and more punk bands, so I listened to less and less metal all the time. Mika (guitar) and Joel (bass) have been punks as long as I can remember. When I still had my long hair, they had short punky hair and they were punks. We were hanging with the same people, even though we were listening to different kind of music. Our town was so small, that we were kind of forced to hang out with all kinds of people, punks, metalheads, etc. But that was just great, the way it should be. Those guys also had an impact on me and the music I listen to.

Mika and Joel are still fortunate enough to be on unemployment, though Joel is working at our own Combat Rock Industry record store, supported by the state. Our new drummer is working the theatre. He's doing some acting and taking care of the all the technical shit in theater. I think he's graduating this year. Our new guitarist is working at the university and he's going to be a doctor some day.

It's been always very easy for us to be on tour and do lots of gigs, since we haven't had any other responsibilities really. At one time I was living in Turku and worked in a post office all the time, but I quit it as soon as we were leaving for another tour. Usually we do work only if it doesn't have any effects on our band.

PHOTO BY VILLE ANGER

MRR: So is this band still a hobby, or has it became a job for you guys?

Janne: For sure it's not work for us, at least we don't get any money from it. So I guess it's really a meaningful hobby to all of us. We try to organize our lives so that we can do what we want to with the band. I think it must be a hobby, since we don't get any money. On the other hand we are very serious about this band, we are doing everything the best we can and we are doing it because we want to do this!

MRR: Would the band even be a hobby if you'd get your living from it?

Janne: That's a good question. It's not a profession, that's for sure. Maybe we are semi-professionals. (laughter) This is a hobby. If this was a job, we'd have to do this all the time. Otherwise we wouldn't get any money and wouldn't be able to support ourselves. Not many bands can support themselves with just selling records. You get more money from gigs. I think we'd have to tour at least half of the year, if we'd want to even try get living from this thing. I have a wife and a son now and I co-run this record store, and a label, so I guess I should be in Finland sometimes too. I need to be a responsible adult every now and then. On the other hand it's really scary thought to even think that we'd make living out of this band. If we'd have to do this, I don't know how interesting it would be. We'd be forced to make some compromises. You'd have to start thinking about money more. Nowadays it's cool if we get money in our pockets at the end of the day, but it's not a motivation, it's not the main reason, it doesn't mean that much, not much at all.

MRR: How much has "the family and being responsible adult" changed your lifestyle and being a punk?

Janne: I see many things differently now. I'm still very much pissed off about many things; I think even more than I used to be. On the other hand, not everything is just black and white now. Maybe that's part of being an adult, growing up. I can see different viewpoints and I'm not blaming other people for everything. There are so many things that are connected to each other, it doesn't matter if you like it or not, it is all still connected and you just have to deal with it. And you can't find all the answers from books. I used to read tons and tons of Animal Rights books and the facts said in those books were the absolute truth to me, nothing else mattered. Those Animal Rights issues are just one example here, but the point is, that before I didn't question the issues that were supporting my views. Now I can see other people's points and views too and can even understand them. I think that when my son's birth had a huge impact on me. I got a lot more interested in everything going around me again. It was a much-needed kick in the ass. Now I really want to make this world a better place again; I want my son to have a good world to live in, in peace.

I've also noticed that when we have a gig in Finland, I always want to drive back home that same night. I try to be home as much as I can; I want to see my son too.

MRR: What do you think about the Finnish punk scene right now?

Janne: I think it's really good. The last couple of years have been really inspiring to me. Lots of great new bands and a really good atmosphere. I don't think we have changed that much as people, our music has changed a bit for sure. There used to be more all-ages places before. It seems that the scene here was very stagnant for many years and nothing really was going on. The scene was very divided: hardcore bands playing at hardcore shows and punk bands playing at punk gigs. Now we are going in a better direction again. I wish it'd be more what it was when we started to going to gigs. It wasn't divided at all.

MRR: Oh yeah, like those gigs in Lahti.

Janne: Exactly!! All those different styles were presented there. Anything and everything at one gig. There were some really poppy bands like Karkkiautomaatti and the next band might be some total noise core like Arseslaughter. There could be metal bands as well—it was not divided at all. I liked that.

MRR: Yep, but there were less people involved in the scene those days.

Janne: That's true and that may be one of the reasons it was not divided. No one could afford to split the scene, the gigs would have been really fucking small.

PHOTO BY KRISTOFER PASANEN

So anyway, there are some really good bands nowadays for sure. First one to come to my mind is Lighthouse Project. They have only released that one demo. Some Pax America people are involved in that band, younger guys really… It's really honest and sincere and it's brilliant hardcore. The lyrics are awesome too! Unkind is super cool too and in fact we just released their new album on Combat Rock Industry. Unkind is not exactly a new band, but they are still pretty damn good. I think many of the bands playing in Finland now are really good. People take playing way more seriously than before. That's a big difference. Like for instance when we started, every band was totally wasted when they were playing gigs. Now people even care how they are playing, mostly. That's a good thing too.

MRR: That might have something to do with the fact that there are still many same people playing in these bands than fifteen years ago, they just know how to play now and take it a step more seriously.

PHOTO C/O WWW.XEMBRACEX.DE

Janne: Yep, I think that has something to do with it. Maybe people just play less drunk. Think about all these classic Finnish bands like Kaaos, Maho Neitsyt, and the rest. They were always absolutely smashed at every gig, passing out during the set and all that. I don't know if they were insecure about themselves or if the drunkness just was their thing that they needed or wanted to do every day and still do. Anyway they just had to be drunk on stage. I also think that the instruments and all the equipment are better now, with the same money you are able to get better and better stuff all the time. Maybe it's also more challenging and encouraging to see that other bands also work more for their sound and for their songs.

MRR: You've been together as a band over nine years already and people change in that time, for sure. How come you are still together? As an example I'd say that bands in US tend to do one record or so and split up. Then they form a new band. How come you are still here?

Janne: I would assume that we are more into this, more dedicated than most bands. We know that we won't be big rock stars ever and we don't want to be. I hope no one even has that kind of ideas if they are involved in this scene. Still, some bands and people are trying their wings with this music and when they don't become instant hits they move on to some different style or scene, where's the dedication from that? I've noticed that in some Swedish punk rock bands actually. Some people just think that this whole punk this is something that only is a phase and belongs to your youth. Then you suddenly grow up and realize that all this is childish and you need to quit everything that once was so important. If money means you more than playing, you won't be involved in this very long. I've been always very much into playing this style of music and meeting people and traveling all the possible and impossible places. We are still very much motivated to continue playing and doing what we do. Things have been evolving all the time for us. Maybe our music has changed a little bit, less metal influences and more punk. It's not something we have been doing intentionally, it has just happened. I've noticed it when I've been listening to our old records.

MRR: So, how come the new stuff is much more aggressive, harder than before? To me, this is a good thing, but what happened? Are you more aggressive people now? Ha!

Janne: Oh yes, it's way more aggressive. Maybe we are a little bit gloomier than before, not so optimistic about this world anymore. Even so many of the so-called hardcore bands are trying to get videos to MTV and all that bullshit. It's all shaped for television and it's all planned out for their careers. On the other hand that gives us even more motivation, when you realize that's not your thing and we need to show that there's still something real here, not planned for your TV and all that crap. If the trend is to make poppier songs, we are going the other way.

We haven't really had any compromises so far and I like it that way. We've always just had the feeling to do things the way we want, to do what feels right to us. Though we've had some pretty strange offers that we just had to say no. That's the beauty of DIY; you can do what you want and you can say no. We've made some mistakes too. A couple of years ago we were asked to go to this place, it was some kind of school year ending celebration, I don't know, anyway… It was us and Wasted playing and then there were some people preaching about God and couple of gospel-bands. We didn't feel very comfortable there. It was at the ice hockey ring in the city of Kokkola. If you had been drinking any alcohol, they wouldn't let you in. The boys in our band didn't like that. So the audience had only the real friends of God and those few sober people that knew who we actually were. It was really big place and I don't know maybe 50 people inside. Some guy preached about God just before we were supposed to play too. That was horrible. At least we learned our lesson. We didn't really know what we were doing. It sounded like a good thing at the phone, but the reality of it was quite different.

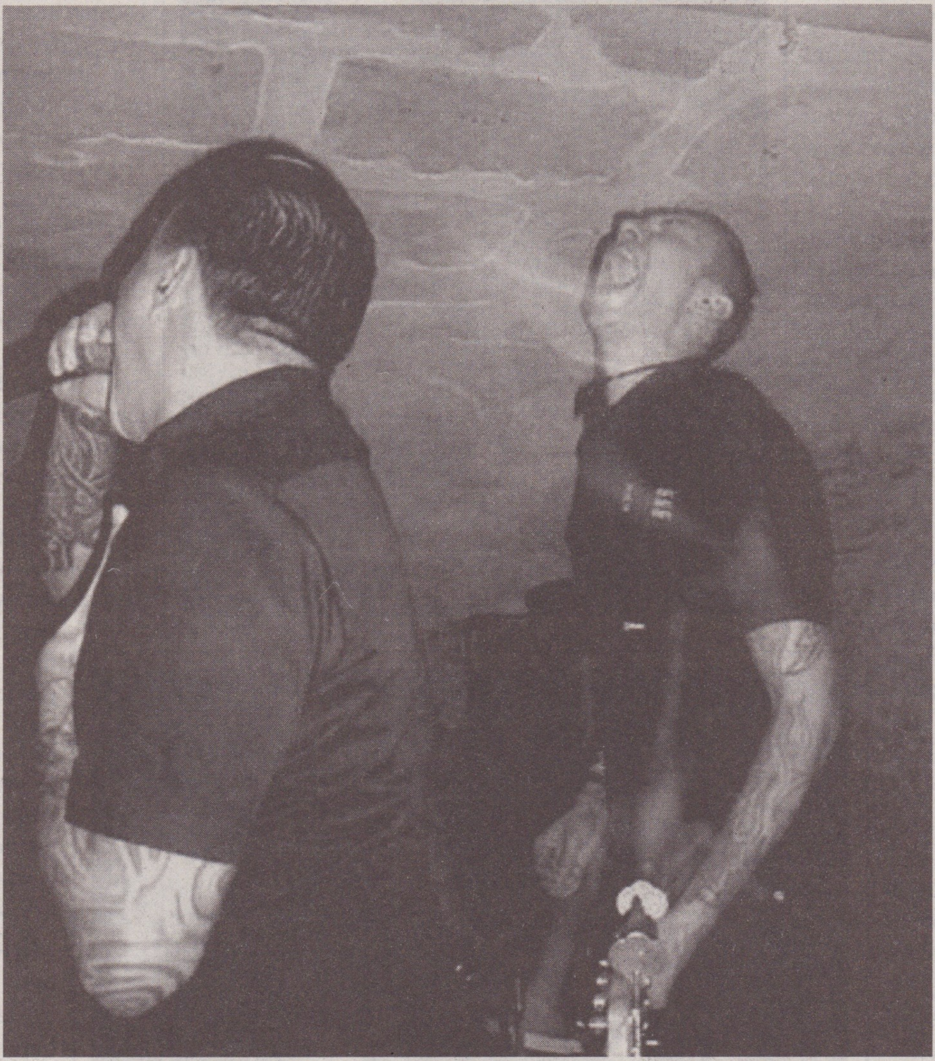


PHOTO BY GASPARD MONTAGNE

MRR: That new record of yours has quite open and clearly political lyrics. Why write political lyrics, why not just do love songs?

Janne: I want to write political lyrics, but maybe I'm so simple-minded that I need to write rather simple political lyrics myself. I really like bands that have deep, intelligent political lyrics like Catharsis. There's a band that have always had lots of stuff to say. Though on the other hand I think that some of the message might get lost in those metaphors. To me it's more natural to go straight to the point. It's still all the issues I've been thinking for a long time myself, but it just bursts out to paper in few minutes. So it's not very complicated poetry.

I think it's also clearing your own thoughts to yourself. There has to be something personal in the lyrics, otherwise you can't really relate to it yourself. I try to avoid all kinds of nonsense. It has to have something from our lives or something from our own experiences. I'm interested in many different things and I like to update myself for what the hell is happening in this world.

I don't think myself as a preacher. I don't think I have the answers. I don't think my words actually change this world over night or anything childish like that. It's more personal feelings and views. We've also got some feedback that we've opened some eyes and people have seen things differently after reading our lyrics, people could relate to the lyrics. That's also strange. I don't think our lyrics should change people's views just like that. I don't want people to change their views to same as mine, just because they read the lyrics. But I hope that the lyrics make people think and question things. If you get some new ideas and feelings from them, great! I don't mind. It might give some sparks to someone to try to find out about this world on their own. That might happen. I know it has happened before, I have found many things through the bands that have been very important to me past fifteen years. Those bands still give you a kick into your ass when needed!

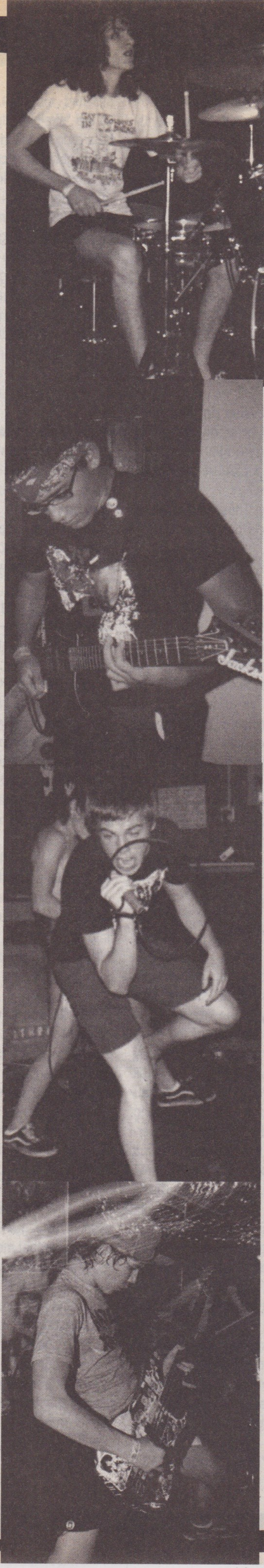
MRR: I've had the flu lately, what do you do if you feel really bad and powerless?

Janne: Go out. I've noticed that in me at least. Sometimes I'm really fucking tired and nothing interests me. Then you lay on the couch too easily and watch TV. I've noticed that going out makes me feel a lot better. It's amazing. When I was living alone, I might have stayed inside five days in a row and then I was wondering why I was feeling like shit. Then you need to go out and see friends.

MRR: I think I'll go outside right now…

BADEATINGHABITS

BADEATINGHABITS is a four-piece thrash band from Tampa, Florida. They sound rad as hell!!! Their buzzsaw guitar, screamed vocals, and brutal thrash anger have gained them a sizable local following. BEH has played numerous local shows in the greater Tampa area with such punk legends as MDC, Bones Brigade, RATTUS and Skitsystem and has toured Florida as well. Band members and all around radical dudes Dan, vox, Tommy, drums, Kenny, bass, and Nick, guitar can be found thrashing bowls or chillaxing at Sound Idea in Brandon, FL!!! Buy their 7" split with Reason of Insanity out now on Psycho Wolf Records and watch out for their upcoming split with fellow thrashers Destrux. Skate or die! Interviewed by Eric Kelly. Photos by Tony Nardo, Big Hair Jeff and Chris Wall.



MRR: To start off, please give us all your names, and what you do in the band.

Dan: I'm Dan and I chip in for pizza money just about every time. I sing too.

Nick: I'm Nick. I'm the guitarist and king of farts.

Kenny: I'm Kenny and I play bass. I also help out with the nudity factor.

Tommy: My name is Tommy IG-88, and I wish I had iron fists.

MRR: Why did you name the band Bad Eating Habits?

Dan: Bad Eating Habits was a product of Tommy and I just sitting in my room. It was just one of those things that hits you when you're going to sleep. It doesn't have much of a special meaning behind it or anything.

MRR: What was your favorite show to play?

Kenny: The Rattus and Reason of Insanity show for sure.

Nick: Our show with Skitsystem. Hands down.

Dan: There have been highlights to a bunch of shows we've played over the past year and a half. It'd be hard to pick a favorite. I'll say that the Bones Brigade show was killer. There was a good amount of kids, lots of true dudes, and Bones Brigade was killer. ANS too.

Tommy: So many, dude. I love playing shows with all of the fun Brandon, Florida bands—Machete Attack, John Madden and the Electric Condoms, SmallTalkDeath, etc. Other than that, I had oodles of fun playing with ANS and Bones Brigade. Those were some true dudes.

MRR: What's the Brandon scene like right now?

Nick: The shred has been dead, but I see a resurrection in the near future.

Tommy: It's going OK now. I just wish that kids around these parts would stop being lazy and start some bands! I've even been letting my friends borrow instruments from me so they can get their shit together. Other than that, we're having lots of fun at shows at Sound Idea and the Skatepark of Tampa. There's some rad people around, and some not-so-rad people.

Dan: Sound Idea is the crucial heart of Brandon for us, and it's really just a pretty small group of kids that are there on a regular basis. Sure, we get kids coming around on Saturday nights to hang out for a show or something, but as far as kids sticking around and being part of it, it's pretty small. If more people would buy records and we had more buzzing minds coming through here and being more productive, then things could get better.

Kenny: Kinda slow. Not as many kids come into Sound Idea to buy records as there could be. We just skate a lot and every once and a while we get new kids.

MRR: Are you guys going to tour?

Kenny: Hopefully we can do something with Destrux and our sister band SmallTalkDeath this summer.

MRR: What are some bands that have influenced you?

Tommy: For me, I would say Helder from Raw Power is a big influence. But when it comes to the band's sound, I'd say Cheetah Chrome Motherfuckers, early DRI, Urban Waste, and Die Kreuzen.

Kenny: Early Italian stuff like CCM and Raw Power, and fast North American stuff from around the same time like Gang Green and Neos.

Dan: There's this kid that lives up the street and plays xylophone in his driveway. Just watching him is pretty motivating.

Nick: I would have to say I'm heavily influenced by a lot of Japanese hardcore. I really dig bands like GISM and Kuro.

MRR: Are any of you guys involved in other projects?

Kenny: I play bass for SmallTalkDeath.

Tommy: I've been trying to start some stuff up. No big deal right now.

Dan: I'm the only one in the band who hasn't been working on anything else. Kenny has SmallTalkDeath, Tommy attempts to start a new band or at least comes up with an idea literally every three days (and that is not an exaggeration), but I'm just sticking to this for now, partially because it's the only thing I know how to do.

Nick: I've been working on some stuff and hopefully it'll all come together soon.

MRR: If you could play with five bands past or present, who would they be and why?

Kenny: Septic Death, Failure Face, Jerry's Kids.

Tommy: I'd definitely want to play with Nuclear Assault and SOD. Don't ask. I'd play with The Worst, the Offenders, and Throwdown! We could have a lot of fun with Throwdown!! We could eat cigarettes in front of them and stuff.

BADHABITS

Those dudes can suck it.

Dan: DEVO. Just Devo. I don't wanna play with anyone else.

Nick: GISM, Raw Power, Negazione, Terveet Kadet, and Septic Death. They were the bands that got me hooked on punk rock. Without them, I'd probably be some shitty-ass hippie.

MRR: What's up with you dudes and pizza?

Kenny: Pizza rules.

Dan: Agreed.

Nick: Fuck pizza. I like burritos.

MRR: What was your least favorite show to play?

Tommy: I always love to play shows, so I don't really have a "least favorite." Although I really didn't like when we played with Wake Up on Fire from Baltimore. Nothing against them—they were cool dudes—but they sound like a bum pissing. Worse than Crass.

Kenny: Some shitty scenester party. There were only like, two true dudes there.

Nick: Any show where nobody is moving is pretty shitty to me.

Dan: Yeah, that scenester party sucked to the max. It was like 200 kids. Totally a sea of white belts. We had some prick thinking it'd be cool to run up and knock Kenny's amp over mid-set, so Kenny hit him with his bass and it ended up getting really stupid. At one point Kenny got naked and chased off some girls and stopped playing. Nick and Tommy were the only ones playing and Kenny and I were just running around fucking with people and jumping on them. Eventually we were told to just stop and we left. It wasn't all that bad. I got to stick a dead squirrel in some prick's bass drum upon leaving. I'm sure he freaked out. Actually, come to think of it...that might have been one of our best.

MRR: You guys released a split with Reason Of Insanity. How has the response to that been?

Nick: A lot of people seem to like it. Hopefully we can keep up the momentum.

The title of the song "Stay in the Truck" actually has virtually nothing at all to do with the subject matter or what I'm singing about. The song title pertains to being in a truck and having it attacked by savage raptors at Jurassic Park. I'm singing, however, about macho Christian tough guy hardcore and militant straight edgers (who are often Christians as well).

Kenny: It's almost out of print. Reason of Insanity is rad, and I'm glad we got to do our first release with them.

MRR: Any plans for more releases?

Dan: We're releasing a split 7" with the Rotcore debutantes Destrux. Other than that, we've got nothing for now. Shit, I don't even remember all of our songs.

MRR: What do you think about bringing the mosh and two-stepping and spin kicks at hardcore shows?

Kenny: Those kids can eat it. Circle pits are where it's at.

Tommy: Well, bringing the "mosh" isn't too fun for me. I'm too fragile for that shit, so I only have fun circle pitting. Two-stepping looks funny, especially when the dudes take it seriously. To each his own, but when I get kicked in the face with a Reebok, I want to destroy!

Dan: I think it's silly. I feel like I'm looking through the window of some Tae Kwon Do classroom in a strip mall, except everyone in there is wearing camo shorts.

Nick: Less Urkel, more circle. That's all I have to say.

MRR: What made you guys write songs like "Stay in the Truck?"

Dan: The title of the song "Stay in the Truck" actually has virtually nothing at all to do with the subject matter or what I'm singing about. The song title pertains to being in a truck and having it attacked by savage raptors at Jurassic Park. I'm singing, however, about macho Christian tough guy hardcore and militant straight edgers (who are often Christians as well). I think that is bullshit. You can't mix Christianity with hardcore music. I mean, sure, the music these kids are creating is just a watered down chugga chugga mess, but they are labeling it "hardcore" and I don't wanna be affiliated with that. They're also calling themselves "straight edge" as well. I mean, you can be a drug free Christian or whatever, but it's just downright silly to call yourself straight edge and be a firm believer in organized religion as well. It makes no sense. I mean—straight edge—whatever; I don't use drugs, I don't drink, I'm not running around having sex with a bunch of different girls—I don't even take Tylenol. But I don't call myself straight edge and I don't mark big X's all over shit or anything like that, because I don't want to have anything to do with any of that macho mess and that Christian slop. But luckily, I've never heard any Christian band with a good sound, so I'm not worried about it polluting anything I'm involved in anytime soon.

MRR: Does skateboarding have anything to do with your music?

Kenny: Not really. We just like to skate. People listen to our music when they skate. Well, I do anyways.

Dan: No. We skateboard, but we don't have any songs about it...not until I run out of things to write about anyways.

MRR: So you guys support GCHC—"Gulf Coast Hardcore—Tell me about that.

Tommy: Well, what can I say? I fucking love the Gulf Coast dudes. I live in Tampa, which happens to be on the Gulf of Mexico. The dudes are nuts. They party hard. I don't party hard, but it's fun to watch Howie (Reason of Insanity) get naked and listen to Josh yell about Crudos being the best band of the 1990s. I can't think of one band that deems themselves GCHC that sucks. Maybe it's all of this humidity, plus our Toxin III and Hated Youth records, that drives us to cooldom.

Kenny: It's just rad Gulf Coast bands from Texas to Florida supporting each other however we can. I fucking love it man. It's a GCHC family. Josh and Howie from Reason of Insanity got me into it.

Nick: I dunno. After this hurricane season, there isn't going to be a Gulf Coast.

MRR: Do you have any last things you want to say?

Kenny: Pizza rules. Oh, and this is where I tell you to buy our records. Do that...and eat pizza...at the same time! Also, grab your fucking board and skate!

Tommy: If anybody has any Pink Swimming Kool-Aid packets that they don't want, send them to us. I will steal you some beer or some shit that you punkers are into nowadays.

Nick: Save a horse, ride a cowboy.

Dan: If your gums bleed when you brush your teeth, then that means you might have gingivitis. Consult the dentist if signs of gingivitis are present. The dentists will examine your mouth and teeth and look for soft, swollen, red-purple gingiva. Deposits of plaque and tartar may be visible at the base of the teeth. The gums are usually painless or mildly tender. No further testing is usually necessary, although dental X-rays and dental gingival probing (measuring the amount of bone) may be performed to determine whether periodontitis (spread of inflammation to the supporting structures of the teeth) has developed.

OUT COLD.

stepan

One of the longest running hardcore punk outfits from America, Out Cold represents, if nothing else, complete consistency. Their reputation rests not on any "musical growth" but on their blunt force, their shunning of trends, and standing alone regardless of the ebb and tide of acceptability of their sound—all this, while possessing extensive knowledge of music far beyond what most would expect. Even with more member changes than most bands, they have soldiered on. This interview was done over email with one half of the group's core, John Evicci. Interview by Gabby.

MRR: With the title of the last album, *Goodbye Cruel World*, people have to wonder: are you breaking up?
Jonh: There was talk of breaking up after this last record. Unfortunately, Mark told some people about this before it was really definite. Shortly afterwards, we had this unexpected writing spurt, so for right now it looks like we're back in full swing.

MRR: What's next on the menu if you're not breaking up? New records?
John: Yes, we're almost done writing for a whole new full-length. We're hoping to have it done this year. That's about it, though. No tours or anything.

MRR: Speaking of touring, I've tried to con you guys into coming to Detroit before with no luck. Why no US tour?
John: This is a somewhat complicated question to answer. Basically, I would say it's mostly due to our experiences throughout the history of the band. We formed in 1989 and cut our teeth on the gig scene in the early 90s, which was basically the *worst* time for an old-school hardcore band to be doing anything. So, this seemingly endless parade of horrible local shows put a real bad taste in our mouths for playing out. Then, we went to Europe in 1998 and had a really good experience there. The shows were good; people were into it. It was completely different from what we were used to back home. So, I think this instilled in our minds a real pro-Europe, "fuck the US" attitude. Even when things got a lot better here in the early 2000s, we still didn't really feel all that good about playing locally. We still pretty much feel this way. I'm not sure if it's still justified or not, but it's there. Also, we all work full-time jobs, so we can't really do a big tour in Europe, then come back and do a big tour here, so it's a matter of choosing what we think is the better of two options.

MRR: Yeah, it seems like you're more appreciated in Europe than here. From the tours over there, to the records coming out over there. What's the story with your connections there, and do you feel the

reception is stronger there?
John: Yeah, I would definitely say we're more appreciated in Europe. We've never done an extensive US tour, so we don't know for sure, but based on our experiences so far and all the feedback we get, it's a pretty safe assumption. The connection is due solely to Kangaroo. Henk from Kangaroo Records was the one who first brought us to Europe and he, of course, releases our records there. If it weren't for him we probably would hardly be connected with the European scene.

MRR: So you've toured through Russia, as seen in your new DVD. For those of us who have never been behind what was the Iron Curtain, what was it like? Any plans for any other tours to the far reaches? Out Cold Guam Tour 2006?
John: Our time in Russia was stressful and exhausting, but exhilarating and, at the end of the day, very gratifying. The logistics of everything was a huge hassle all the way and I ended up losing a bunch of money, but the shows were amazing, and just being in Russia was a total mind-fuck. I'm so glad we got the opportunity to go there and do that. Luckily, and very surprisingly, we had absolutely no trouble with the border crossing or authorities of any kind. We had a much harder time with that type of shit in the former Yugoslavia. We have no plans for any touring right now. All we're focusing on is writing the next couple albums.

MRR: Now, we've discussed the band's feelings about touring the US but how do you feel about the state of US HC/Punk? You've been around long enough to see the patterns but how's it going now in your opinion?
John: It's really amazing to me to see how popular this shit has become again. When we started out it was so different. No one had any fucking idea what we were trying to do. I mean *no one*! I really hate to be like, "Back in my day…" but it really is amazing to me. I never expected the scene to explode like this. In general, I think it's great. I'm glad to see people turning on to good music and being supportive of the DIY punk/hardcore scene. There are a lot of good bands. You've got to sort through a lot of the chaff, but basically things are a thousand percent better now than they were fifteen years ago.

goxne

sigurður harðarson

jussi kenttämaa

goxne

MRR: Having been there during the lean years, and gone so long with little recognition, have you ever felt slighted? I'm sure there had to be some frustrating points along the way.
John: Yeah, sure, it's been frustrating to be playing now for over fifteen years, have released six albums and still be virtually unknown, while we've seen countless bands release one 7" and basically surpass us. However, we never cared about being popular. We do this only to please ourselves and that's it. If some other people get into it, cool. If not, we don't really give a fuck. We were complete outsiders when we formed and it's pretty much stayed that way, even after our style of music has come back into fashion.

MRR: On your last comment, you guys are a band whom I feel inspires loyalty. People either don't know Out Cold or they love it. I assume you get that reaction. Is that accurate?
John: Yeah, I've found that to be the case, and to me, that's a good thing. I'd much rather have a hundred people who really appreciate us than a hundred thousand who like us because we're the trendy thing or because we have this sharp image or whatever.

MRR: You have run Acme records for a long time now and put out a pretty eclectic mix of bands. How long and how many? What's still around?
John: The label is now eight years old and I've released records by thirteen different bands. Most of my 22 releases are still in print. Unfortunately, most of the bands are broken up now, but that's the great thing about records: they endure long after the people who made them.

MRR: You guys have had some strong connections to some bands/people that polarize people, e.g., GG Allin, Ramones members, etc. Have you ever had bad reactions from these associations? Particularly GG. *[Who is polarized by the Ramones? –Ed.]*
John: No, not that I'm aware of. I actually don't really perceive those connections having had a positive *or* negative effect on us, but I'm not sure.

MRR: Speaking of those connections, you've had more than a few offshoots over the years—what else do the members have going right now?
John: For a while there was a lot of side-band activity amongst our members. That's kinda died down a bit in the last few years. Mark is still involved with Bad Chopper (CJ Ramone's new band), but it's not really a full-functioning band. Mikey sings and plays guitar for the Prowl, and Deuce has a side band called the Strangers.

MRR: Now when you guys started out in a slower, more scum-punk kind of style, and record by record it's gotten more and more intense and to the point. Was this intentional or more due to the revolving door you guys seem to have on guitars and bass?
John: It's just a result of what we wanted to do at the time. As original members fell away, Mark took over pretty much all the songwriting, so I guess that's some reflection of his muse at the time or whatever.

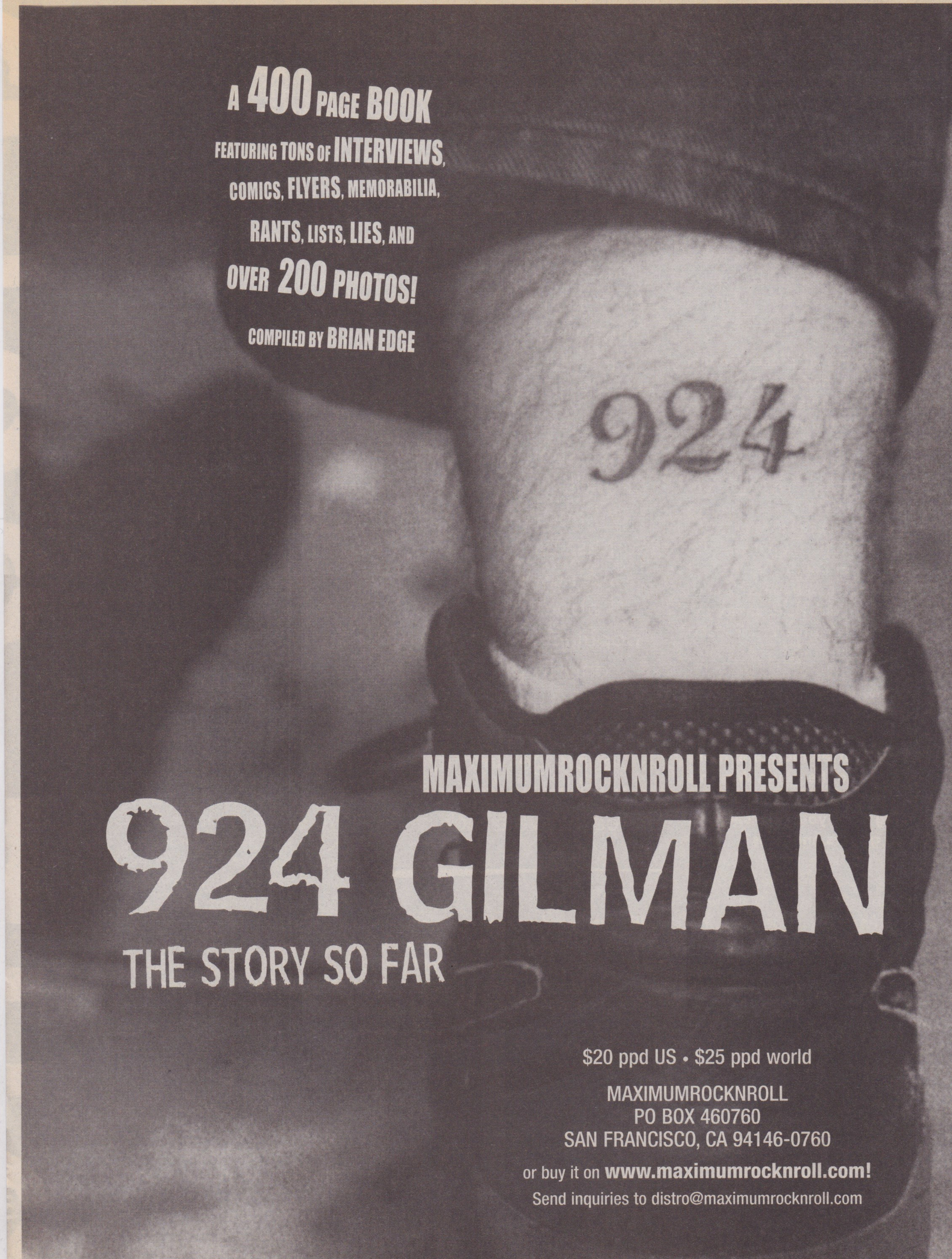
MRR: And another thing, you started out more rocking, then you streamlined it down, and now the rock is creeping back in...
John: Yeah, I don't know. We've always tried to keep a good balance between the fast stuff and the more mid-tempo stuff. I really don't see the pendulum swinging largely one way or the other over the years, but maybe that's because I don't have an outsider's perspective. There definitely wasn't a conscious decision to write more rockin' stuff or anything. If we did, then that's just where our heads were at the time.

> Yeah, sure, it's been frustrating to be playing now for over fifteen years, have released six albums and still be virtually unknown, while we've seen countless bands release one 7" and basically surpass us. However, we never cared about being popular. We do this only to please ourselves and that's it. If some other people get into it, cool. If not, we don't really give a fuck.

MRR: I've heard people complain that all your albums sound the same, which I personally don't see exactly. You guys have a style and you stick to it—much like the Ramones or Motörhead, which is crucial for any band's longevity. What makes you guys continue to write these angry, abrasive blasts? Why not get religion or take Prozac or something?
John: I personally don't think all our albums sound the same. The differences may be relatively minor, but they're there. It's important to us to be consistent. We grew up on bands that started out playing a certain way, then "progressed" and changed into a style we didn't like, so we've always tried to keep an eye on that. We like playing this type of music and we feel that we still have something good to offer, so why change? We don't believe in religion. Some of us have tried anti-depressants and shit like that, but it didn't really work out. Hopefully someday we'll find peace of mind and not feel compelled to play this type of music anymore.

MRR: Let's hope not. Now wrapping things up, you guys seem to have a consistent "branding" to your releases. Meaning, you can always tell an Out Cold release right away. Is this a conscientious decision or just me overanalyzing things?
John: Not exactly sure what you mean by "branding." Do you mean in the look of our records, or the sound? Our sound is definitely a conscious effort to maintain our own distinct style, to whatever extent we can. One of the gates that any new material has to pass through is whether or not this song or that is "Out Cold" material. Sometimes we come up with something that doesn't really fit into the vision we have for what the band should be, and it's discarded or reworked. Yeah, we definitely feel we have a certain sound to maintain. If you mean our art, I'd be surprised to hear anyone say we have any consistency with cover art. We're really clueless when it comes to artwork. We definitely don't go for a certain "brand" or look or anything like that. We just go with the best thing we can find at that particular time, which has been pretty damn pathetic at times, especially on some of those early records.

MRR: Well, thanks for your time and to wrap it up, any last words?
John: Thanks for the interview and your interest/support!



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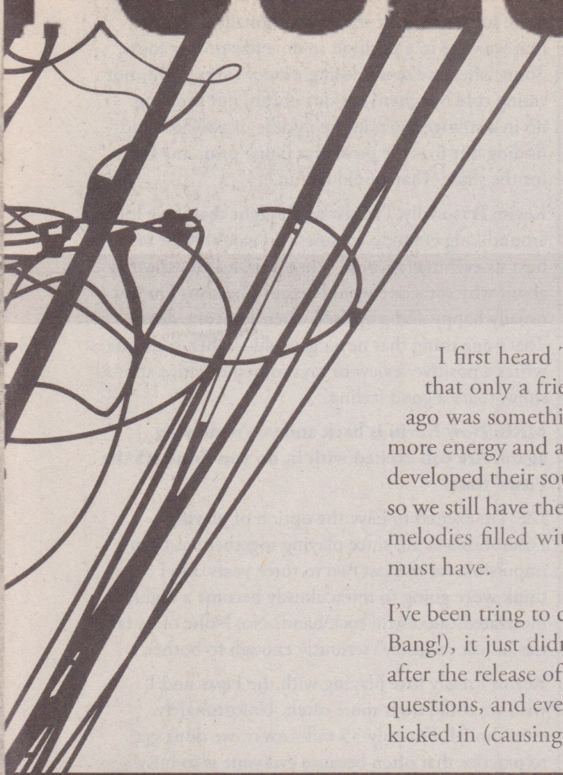
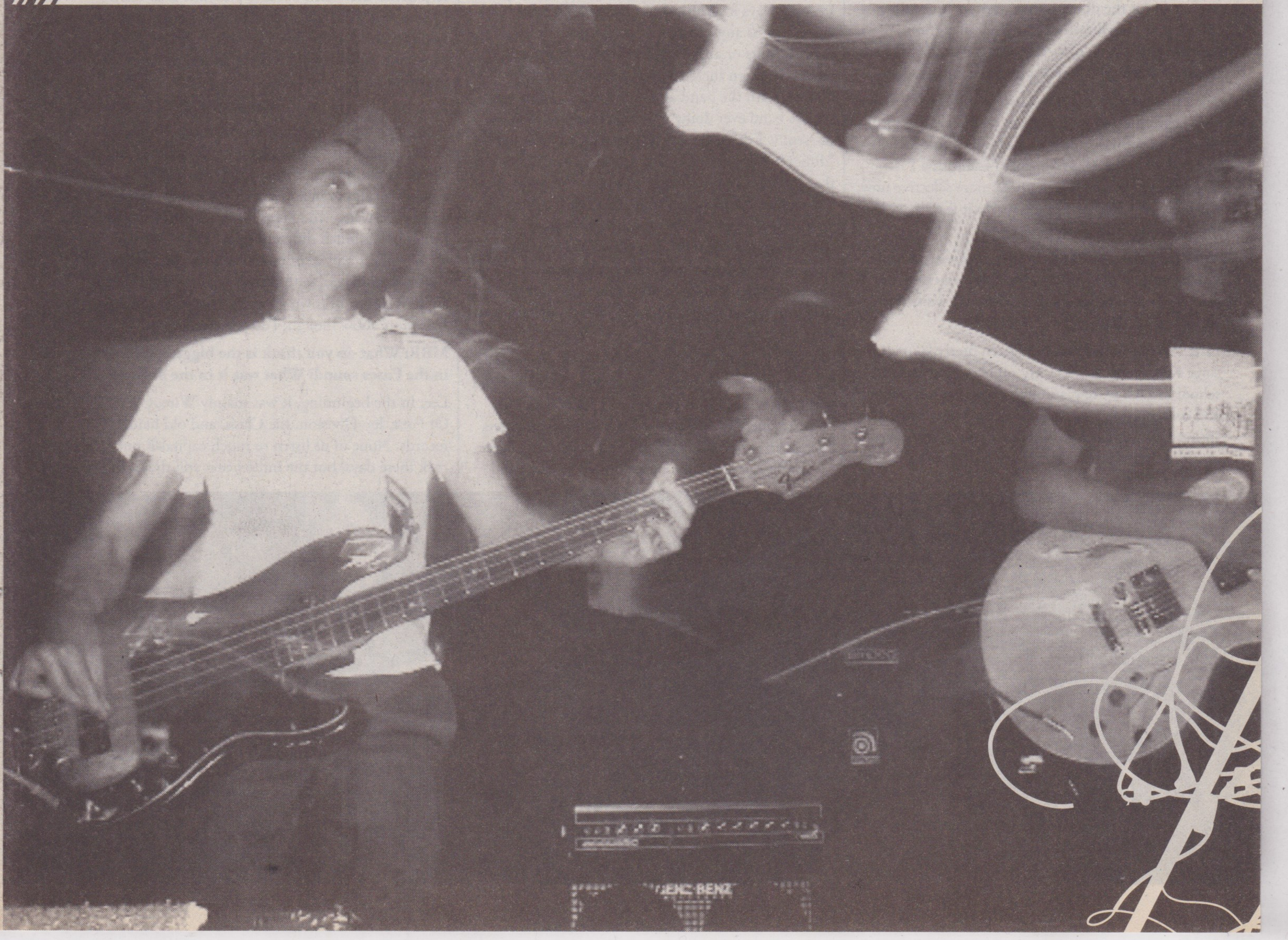
FUSES

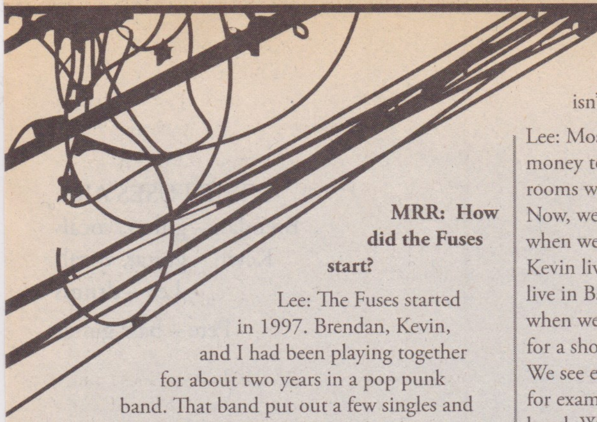


THE FUSES ARE:
Brendan – guitar, vocals
Kevin – guitar, vocals
Lee – drums
Pete – bass guitar

I first heard The Fuses thanks to a couple of songs a friend taped for me. They seemed to be the usual band that only a friend of a friend of a friend knew of, and they totally amazed me. What they were doing six years ago was something fresh and very unusual back then: to revisit 1977 with an arty edge, unbelievable hooks, and more energy and attitude than any of the bands that have tried that sound since then. Time has passed, and they've developed their sound, they've channeled their anger better than practicing thai-boxing or destroying Ikea furniture, so we still have the broken rhythms, angular guitar riffs, and arty attitude, but more importantly, we now have great melodies filled with Kinks influences. The latest record—*Eastern Cities*—is one of those records that you simply must have.

I've been tring to do this interview for years. Originally intended for the third issue of my zine (the Spanish fanzine Bang!), it just didn't happen. "Our talent for self promotion is none," Pete (the bassist) told me. Finally, not long after the release of *Eastern Cities*, this interview is ready. Lee, drums, and Kevin, guitar/vocals, kindly answered my questions, and eventually Pete—though he was busy being jumped outside of a bar and quite literally had his head kicked in (causing him vision problems)—could do it too, so the interview was completed some months ago.





it seems that getting band stuff done is more and more difficult, but I guess that isn't unusual.

MRR: How did the Fuses start?

Lee: The Fuses started in 1997. Brendan, Kevin, and I had been playing together for about two years in a pop punk band. That band put out a few singles and did some touring around the US, but became very frustrating for us. Pop punk is a very limiting, formulaic musical style, and we got sick of playing it. We kicked out the singer/bass player and used that as an excuse to ditch our old songs and start over fresh. (The first Fuses single was actually recorded at a studio session intended for our defunct pop punk band.)

Mark Minnig (formerly of The Thumbs, now in Kid Casanova) offered to fill in on the bass while we looked for someone permanent, and ended up staying in the band for a year and a half. Mark played on the first single and album, and did our first US tour in '98. Pete Ross replaced Mark in Fall '98 and went out on the road with us more-or-less immediately. Pete never played bass guitar prior to joining the band, but the style he developed was a perfect fit for the direction we went in at the time. His playing toughened up the rhythm section considerably. These days, the songs have slowed back down, become a bit artier, a bit more nuanced.

The Fuses were pigeonholed as a punk band from the very beginning, so we got stuck on bills with lots of bands that we hated: lots of mohican-punk-rockers in bondage trousers, or Southern California Fat Records-type bands. We're much more selective now; we rarely play live, and when we do it is only with bands whose music we enjoy.

MRR: I guess the band doesn't give you enough money to pay the bills. So how do you carry on rehearsals and other band duties with your day jobs, and all that?

Pete: Practice and shows have been pretty sporadic since Kevin left town for school. Now that he's at a school in DC, we're planning on writing more songs and even playing some out of town shows in the spring when the new record comes out. Generally speaking, as everyone's lives have grown more "adult," it seems that getting band stuff done is more and more difficult, but I guess that isn't unusual.

Lee: Most of the time we're lucky if we make enough money to buy dinner! We used to rent rehearsal rooms when the band was playing out regularly. Now, we borrow rehearsal space from other bands when we need it, or practice in one of our homes. Kevin lives in Washington, DC and the rest of us live in Baltimore, so we only get together to play when we have a purpose in mind, such as preparing for a show, or writing songs for a new recording. We see each other socially (meeting up for drinks, for example) much more often than we do for the band. We all have day jobs of some kind to pay the bills. Brendan works in landscaping, I write software manuals… None of us work "rock and roll" jobs.

MRR: It looks like a lot of bands that were more underground some years ago, like Les Savy Fav, The Faint, or even Glass Candy are more popular now. It seems that some media coverage and word of mouth has made these bands better known amongst people that wouldn't have been interested in them previously. I think the Fuses have the potential to be very popular, but the question here is, do you want to be popular? Would you do something to get to people that would only like you as a trend, or hype?

Pete: I think we have the potential to be more popular as well. However, I don't think any of us has ever taken a careerist attitude towards the band. In some ways it's been a bummer that no label has ever given us any substantial promotion, or helped us with tours or anything. I love playing shows, especially when there's a good audience that is familiar with the band and enthusiastic. I also can't see the band ever doing anything that would make us trendy. I think the music is at times a little too "difficult" for a much wider audience. On top of that, it's hard to get these guys to put their names on a record, let alone pose for pictures, wear outfits or anything like that. We all get the creeps from that sort of band posturing. I remember looking through some music industry magazine in the recording studio and remarking, "I don't know how anyone can stand to look at their own band pictures." The other guys all agreed with me.

Lee: The Fuses haven't achieved much professionally, but the number of people who know about the band and have actively pursued our records consistently surprises me. Having even a few complete strangers express an interest in your music is validating. Since I don't harbor any misconceptions about the band paying my bills or making me famous, it doesn't take much to satisfy me. I enjoy the songwriting process and I enjoy playing live; I'm happy as long as we can write songs and play shows occasionally. I do wish that we were in a position to do a few proper tours. Tours where we're not losing money every night, not eating cold Spaghetti-Os out of can, not showing up in a strange town in the middle of nowhere and finding out that the promoter didn't print any flyers for the show. That would be fun.

Kevin: Personally, I've always thought that if we hung around long enough, anyone who would want to hear us eventually would. There's no reason to worry about why someone would want to hear us; I'm just usually happy and surprised when someone does. That's one thing that never gets old—when someone writes a positive review or says something nice after a show, that's a good feeling.

MRR: Now Kevin is back and you're playing again. Are you excited with it, do you think it's the Fuses' time?

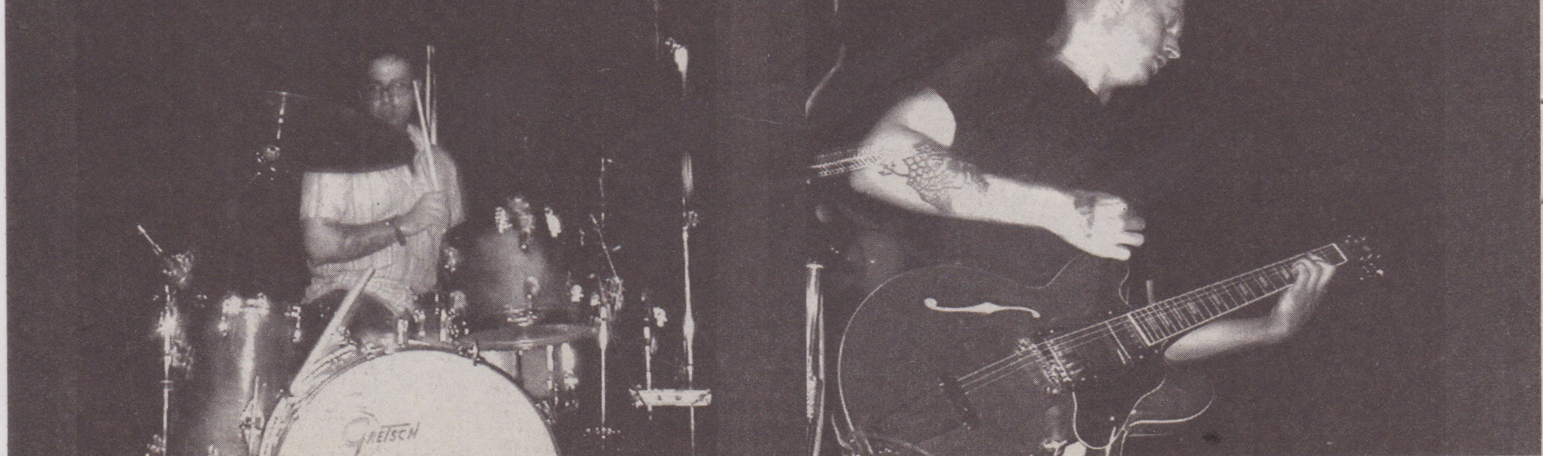
Lee: I'm excited to have the option of playing Fuses shows at all, since playing together has been impossible for the last two to three years. Do I think we're going to miraculously become a highly motivated, successful rock band? No. None of us take the "music industry" seriously enough to bother.

Kevin: I really love playing with the Fuses and I wish we could do it more often. Unfortunately, even though I'm only 35 miles away, we don't get to practice that often because everyone is so busy. Maybe that'll change eventually, but maybe not. Long breaks don't bother me, although I'm pretty sure if we called it quits forever, that would bother me quite a bit.

Pete: We played one show since then, here in Baltimore, and it was fucking great! Really crowded, people going nuts, and a really, really exciting, knock 'em dead performance from us. We're planning on a bunch of shows in and out of town this March and I can't wait. "The Fuses' time?" I can't imagine things being much different than before. We bailed on Morphius and went to an even smaller label so…I think we're all cool with things existing at this level anyhow. If out of town shows got to be like that Baltimore show though, I'd be pretty happy.

MRR: What do you think is the biggest influence in the Fuses sound? What was it in the beginning?

Lee: In the beginning, it was mainly Wire, Gang Of Four, Joy Division, the Clash, and old hardcore records. None of us listen to much capital-P punk rock these days, but the influence is still there. I



expect more of 1960s sound is going to creep into the songwriting—more of The Kinks, more of The Who, more of The Zombies.

Kevin: In the beginning it was definitely Gang of Four, Mission of Burma, etc. Those bands are still major influences, I think, but I don't think we've ever really sounded like them (lazy reviewer comments notwithstanding). Those two bands in particular are great examples of bands that are just impossible to imitate. Even bands that are so clearly trying to rip them off end up sounding completely different.

Lee: Yeah, consider Gang of Four's recent US tour with Radio Four opening as clear evidence of this fact.

Kevin: So maybe "inspiration" is a better word than "influence" in that case.

Pete: At this point we really function as a unit. The music is written as a group, very democratically, and I think what you hear now is the natural proclivities of each of the players. These are the most able and creative guys I've ever played with.

MRR: Have you ever played in Europe?

Kevin: We've never played in Europe, though I think it's safe to say that we'd all love to. It's also pretty safe to say that none of us want to come over unless we could be reasonably sure that we'd have a decent show or two and that we wouldn't lose our shirts on it. Given that you seem to be one of about ten people in Europe that like our records, that seems unlikely to happen anytime soon!

Lee: The Fuses would love to tour Europe, but I don't think it will happen. Thanks to the current political climate, the US Dollar is severely devalued compared to the euro or pound. We don't have a record label to help defer the costs of touring, so all of our expenses (such as plane tickets, equipment rental, van rental, lodging, etc.) would have to be paid by the band. Scheduling a tour would also conflict with our "real world" responsibilities.

Pete: We've never played over there. I'd love to, but it's hard to see how it'd be possible. We don't have the money to do it, especially now that the dollar is in the crapper, and can't imagine anyone putting up the money for a band as obscure as we are.

MRR: What new bands do you like right now?

Kevin: Animal Collective, Decemberists, Dungen, Reigning Sound...those are the bands that come to mind right now.

Pete: I've been digging the Ponies lately, though my bootleg of the YDI 7" has been on heavy rotation at home lately. I know it's not new, I'm just glad to see my taste as a fifteen-year old holding up.

Lee: A few things I'm enjoying: LCD Soundsystem, Marked Men, Libertines, Queens Of The Stone Age, Oranges Band, MOTO, Hot Snakes, Art Brut, Reigning Sound, Regulations, Fascist Fascist, Wrangler Brutes, Les Savy Fav, The Quails, Dead Moon, The Streets, Ted Leo, Guided By Voices, Headache City, Lungfish… lots of stuff, I guess. I've been very impressed by the recent tours by Gang of Four, Metal Urbain, Wire, and Mission Of Burma as well.

MRR: Are you in other bands apart of the Fuses?

Lee: Brendan, the Fuses singer/guitarist and I have a new band called Mean Spirits with Greg Preston of the Slow Jets. I also play drums in a fast, noisy punk band called Deep Sleep. During periods of Fuses inactivity, I kept myself busy doing fill-ins with other bands, the longest of which was a year-and-a-half hitch with The Thumbs.

Pete: I played some shows with the Homosexuals in Exile, which was Bruno Wizard from the original line-up of The Homosexuals, Christian Sturgis, from the Uniform, Rob Girardi, from Cicada, and Dave Andler, owner of Morphius Records. I'm just starting to play banjo in a band with some guys doing old time country.

MRR: Pete, I've heard you not only play them, but you also make banjos. Did that start as a hobby or what?

Pete: I'm very interested in the history of the banjo. I desperately wanted to hear the banjo in its original eighteenth century form, but found that none of the instruments from that period had survived. The only way to hear one was to try to make one. Things kind of took off from there. After New Year's, I'll be leaving Morphius to do banjo work full time.

MRR: I've heard that there was discussion of Pete playing with GG Allin, to play the banjo with him. Are there other punks around there playing the banjo?

Pete: I spoke to Merl Allin right before the last GG show at the Gas Station in NYC. I was drunk and knew those guys were into country so I approached Merl as "the only banjo player on earth willing to play with GG Allin." Merl was enthusiastic and asked me to speak with him after the show, but, as GG died later that night, it was obviously not to be.

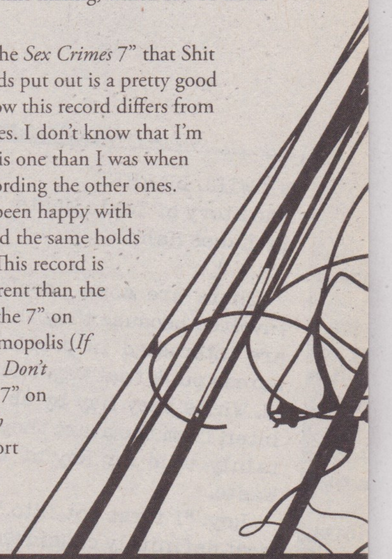
At that time, in 1993, I don't think there were hardly any other punks interested in that sort of music; my friends thought I'd lost my mind. Now, they've all come around, and play similar music and go to the fiddle contests with me. I think this goes for the punk scene in general. I've heard that Portland has an Old Time Country scene made up entirely of punks.

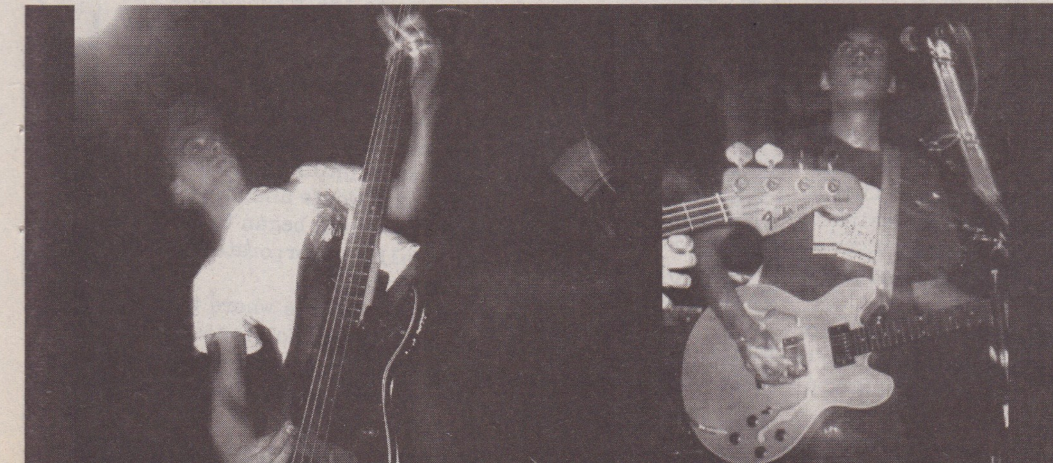
MRR: What can you tell us about the newest Fuses record? Why are you happier with it than with the others?

Lee: The album is called *Eastern Cities* on Shit Sandwich Records of Chicago, Illinois. SS is mostly a singles label, but they have put out some excellent releases by Headache City, Marked Men, MOTO, Final Solutions, etc. *Eastern Cities* isn't nearly as dark as the *Fuses Are Lies* album. The songs are more mid-tempo and more rhythmically varied. The production is less monochromatic; the sounds of the instruments change much more from song to song than on our previous records. Rob Girardi—the engineer who recorded and mixed the album—deserves most of the credit for that. Thanks, Rob! He also deserves an enormous amount of credit for working patiently under occasionally absurd conditions in the studio. Dead tracks on the mixing board, tracks being randomly erased from the master tapes or recording on top of each other, tape machines that wouldn't stop running, tape machines that wouldn't start running. We ran the gamut of technical difficulties on this album.

Pete: It's a more cohesive album, I think. The songs all work together, and I think some of them stand out as our best songs. Less thrash, still plenty of dissonance but with some big hooks. On top of that it was the most comfortable time in the studio, and the easiest time mixing, which can be mind numbing.

Kevin: I think the *Sex Crimes* 7" that Shit Sandwich records put out is a pretty good indication of how this record differs from the previous ones. I don't know that I'm happier with this one than I was when we finished recording the other ones. Each time I've been happy with what we had and the same holds true this time. This record is quite a bit different than the other two, but the 7" on Slamdance Cosmopolis (*If the Communists Don't Dance*) and the 7" on Incognito (*High Rate of Speed*) sort of bridge the gap, I think.





FUSES DISCOGRAPHY:

- * *Eastern Cities* CD/LP (Shit Sandwich Records, 2005)
- * "*Sex Crimes/Me I Disconnect From You*" 7" (Shit Sandwich Records, 2004)
- * *Communists Don't Dance* 7" EP (Slamdance Cosmopolis Records, 2003)
- * *At A Higher Rate of Speed* 7" EP (Incognito Records, Germany, 2003)
- * *Fuses Are Lies* CD (Reptilian Records, 2000)
- * *In Love With Electricity* 7" (1466 Records/Morphius Records, 2000; split with The Uniform)
- * *In Love With Electricity* 12" (Morphius Records, 1999; split with The Uniform)
- * V/A *Dear Fred: Stand By For The Next Objective* CD (Sneezeguard Records, 1999)
- * *I Wanna Burn* CD/LP (American Punk Records, 1998)
- * V/A – *This Is American Punk Vol. 1* CD (American Punk Records, 1998)
- * *Dress For The New Bomb* 7" EP (American Punk Records, 1997)

TOXIC WASTE

WE WILL BE FREE
The Story of Toxic Waste
By Lance Hahn

There are some people who hear about punk and get involved because they think it's cool. There are people who are interested in politics and cultural events and come across punk that way. There are others who are just born to it. While they may by able to verbalize and rationalize it later, from the start they know it instinctively. That's certainly true for Roy of the Northern Ireland band Toxic Waste.

Roy: "I first got into 'punk' when I realized that I was most definitely considered an outsider by my local community. I hated school and my peers we full of shit whom mostly aspired to join various paramilitary organizations. I gravitated towards a group of similar individuals and we began to share music, fanzines, and alternative information about our situations locally, internationally, and on a personal level. I guess being exposed to new ways of thinking about the world first appeared to me through the alternative music, fashion, and politics at the time in Belfast. I was attracted by 'otherness' and a desire to transcend the sectarian life, which was imposed upon me through religion, school, and state by an armed and physical presence."

Originally forming in 1982 on the eastern peninsula of Ards, the group didn't really take shape until moving to Belfast two years later. The original line-up consisted of Patsy and Dane on vocals, Phil on bass, Grub on drums and Marty on guitar. Roy joined as vocalist once the band relocated as Dane moved away to Bristol. With only the slightest experience in helping start the little known Wardance, he was a welcome addition to the group.

Roy: "I had heard of Toxic Waste through the grapevine in the early eighties and at that time there was a kind of division between the old punk scene and this new style of 'Anarcho' punk. It was great, people were active and passionate about their politics, and I started to get into it as well. What you were saying and actually doing meant more than the fashion and music that had categorized the punks of the late seventies. Toxic Waste was one of the new style of punk bands (there were loads of others) who were writing thoughtful 'political' lyrics to their songs and who were living out the lifestyle as well. That's not to say that bands like SLF didn't write these type of songs or believe in them but the difference was that they were wrapped up in all the music industry shit that swallowed up the whole punk philosophy and made it into a business with so many units to shift in the record shops each week. Toxic Waste and other bands rejected all of this and once again began to find new ways for people to resist all the corporate bullshit that had been sucking punk dry.

"The band started in Newtownards where they all lived, and then they moved into the 'Holylands' (a student area of Belfast) in a semi-commune-squat-like existence, except that they had to pay the rent each week. Still they all embraced the situation in N. Ireland with a sharp observation on the way things were and what we could do about it, it was a kind of hybrid political bastard son of punk rock but with loads of Crass type stenciling on manky looking clothes, covered up with the smell of old Petula oil (if I had to sum it all up). When I first met them, I thought they were all a bunch of pretentious wankers and I had a problem with some of the politics they were supporting but over time, loads of discussions and drinking, I began to understand what they were actually trying to achieve and I bought into that too.

"Grub, the bands drummer, looked like and acted like a spiky haired Outcast punk and I got on better with him than Marty, Phil, or Patsy at that time. Eventually the band decided to kick out Dane one of the two vocalists (the other being Patsy), probably because he was a right fucking pain in the arse and it was suggested that I give vocals a go for them. We went to practice in the upstairs of Du Barry's bar near the docks and famous for 'ladies of the night' selling their goods to passing sailors, which was a dump but cheap to use.

"I think our first rehearsal was a disaster with the guitar too loud, bass too loud and drum kit falling to bits, the vocal PA was shite and the whole messy encounter gave me tinnitus and a migraine. Afterwards, I got to know everyone a bit better and felt a bit more relaxed around the politics of the band. It was interesting times in Belfast with clandestine groups in and around this underground network of punks involved in all sorts of anti-state activities from the ALF to Anti-Nuclear action.

"After sustained and determined efforts, we managed to get one good rehearsal under our belts and I really got a buzz for the band. This whole punk network had developed contacts worldwide especially in European countries and I wanted to experience life in a touring band. It was a good but an often-fraught relationship that developed (with Patsy and Phil beating each other up from time to time) between us all and we finally managed to bring out a certain style in the band, though not consciously."

Admittedly, Roy's interest in the band had little to do with their political inclinations.

Roy: "I did not really get into anarcho punk but rather it got into me! Given the binary oppositional politics of N. Ireland late 70s and the reality of everyday life, anarchism allowed for self-empowerment and action rather than apathy."

In fact, the first incarnation of the group was propelled by differing elements and varying degrees of political savvy. Ultimately, they were all on the same page if taking different approaches.

Roy, "I think Patsy was the most 'political' at that time as she was passionate and articulate about who she was and what she believed, however Phil & Marty were central to the concept and politics of the band and all three had a broader view of the political and philosophical challenges we were facing at that time. Both Grub and me were influenced by a narrow view of politics, which possessed more raw emotion rather than intellect. The band was influenced at an early stage by the 'just books' collective and the 'banned' materials which related to the political situation in N. Ireland but also the range of 'anarchist' literature, pamphlets, records, tapes, videos etc which expanded our understanding of the international/global struggles. I think it was down to 'timing' between the desire to speak out and act on the situation we all faced combined with youthful naiveté and a limited but passionate thirst for new information about the world, which influenced the band."

Not surprisingly, the name Toxic Waste had been considered by others as a suitably punk band name. Ironically, another group with the same moniker out of Exeter would later just become The Waste and would also wind up recording for Mortarhate.

Roy: "Not at the time, but later I became aware of them and there is another band in France called Toxic Waste too. I always thought it was a shit name for a band but these things stick with you once you have started. I joined after the name was decided but it rather grows on you!"

With a much smaller scene, the transition between first and second-generation punk was much more gradual. In fact, the generations were hardly clear at all in many cases resulting in a much healthier, supportive atmosphere.

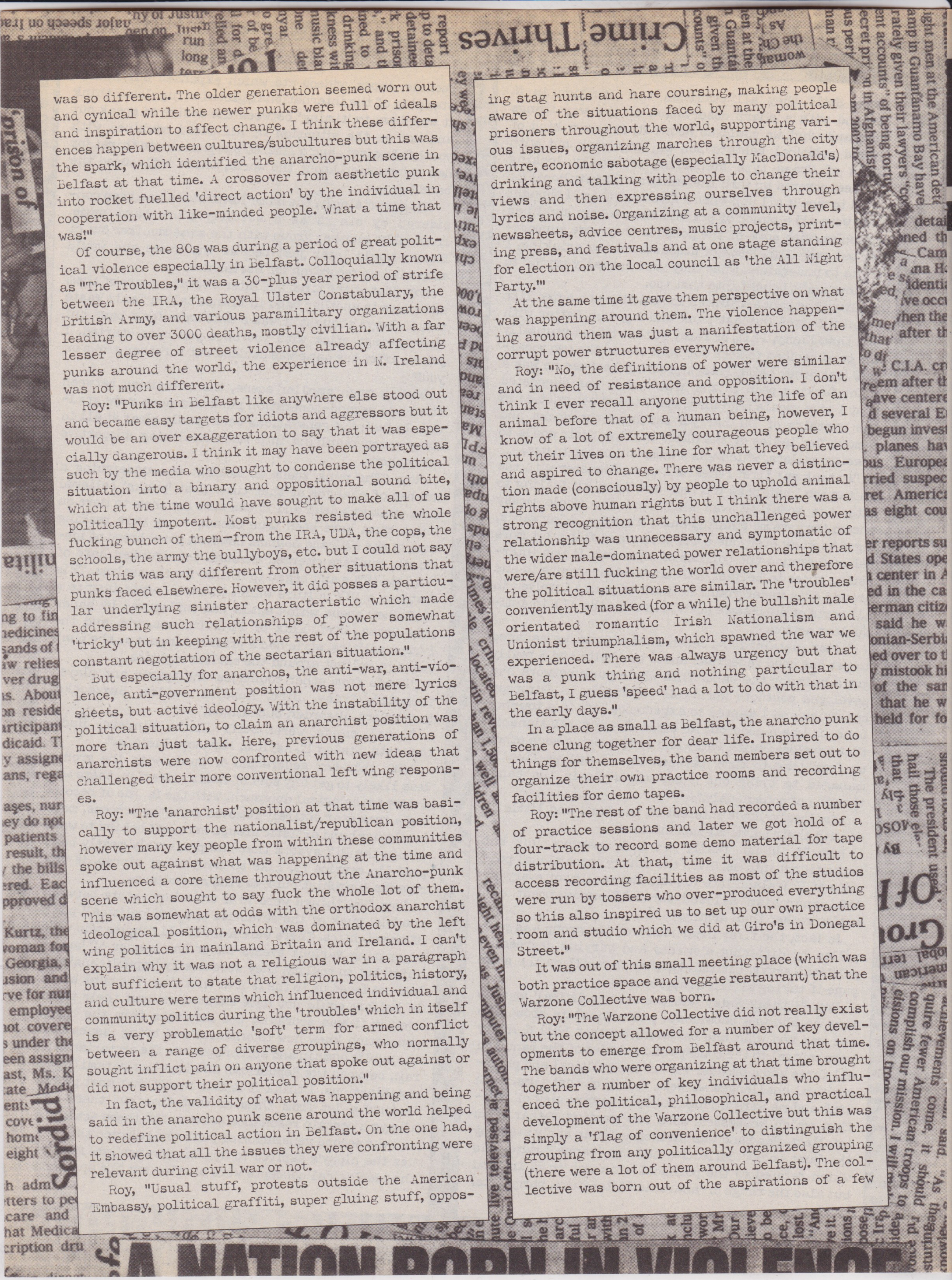
Roy: "The punk scene in Belfast was undergoing a number of changes at that time. Most 'punks' believed that punk was dead and it was time for them to move on which must have been true because they were reading this in the *NME* and *Sounds*. However, a new breed of idealistic punkers emerged through the drunken haze of the late 1970s and began to 'think' for themselves. This fostered a DIY culture which in turn helped inspire a whole new scene which again was influenced by bands like Crass, Dirt, Flux of Pink Indians, etc. and the lyrics, politics, style had a profound impact on the punk scene in Belfast around the earlier eighties.

"Bands from other countries who toured and played included: Crass, Dirt, Rubella Ballet, Buzzcocks, Stranglers, Disorder, Subhumans,

"Local bands were: Stiff Little Fingers, Rudi, Outcasts, Stalag 17, Asylum, Paranoid Visions."

With this new generation of punk, with the groups less likely to get any sort of media attention, there was a more pathological approach. With the façade of becoming a rock star entirely removed from the process, more ideological and artistic groups were left behind to work within the DIY system that had previously mostly been paid lip service to. Like so many other places, it was ripe for anarchist punk to find an audience.

Roy: "No, things were in a transitory state between the 'old' punk of the seventies and the 'political' punk of the eighties. There were a lot of old hippies who were organizing various events under the banner of 'anarchist' but in reality, they were mostly 'republicans' who had not faced up to the fact at that time. The punk scene in Belfast could not have existed without their input even it if was sporadic, the leftovers from the hippy generation knew how to organize and bring issues into the public domain and still negotiate the sectarian terrain between the Republican and Loyalist paramilitary organizations. I think it is fair to say that most people learned a lot from them at that time but there was always a certain resonance between the these activists and the second generation of punk who rejected the values the hippy's aspired to uphold. Strange how most of the ideological concepts were similar but the approach


Crime Thrives
Sordid
A NATION BORN IN VIOLENCE

was so different. The older generation seemed worn out and cynical while the newer punks were full of ideals and inspiration to affect change. I think these differences happen between cultures/subcultures but this was the spark, which identified the anarcho-punk scene in Belfast at that time. A crossover from aesthetic punk into rocket fuelled 'direct action' by the individual in cooperation with like-minded people. What a time that was!"

Of course, the 80s was during a period of great political violence especially in Belfast. Colloquially known as "The Troubles," it was a 30-plus year period of strife between the IRA, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the British Army, and various paramilitary organizations leading to over 3000 deaths, mostly civilian. With a far lesser degree of street violence already affecting punks around the world, the experience in N. Ireland was not much different.

Roy: "Punks in Belfast like anywhere else stood out and became easy targets for idiots and aggressors but it would be an over exaggeration to say that it was especially dangerous. I think it may have been portrayed as such by the media who sought to condense the political situation into a binary and oppositional sound bite, which at the time would have sought to make all of us politically impotent. Most punks resisted the whole fucking bunch of them—from the IRA, UDA, the cops, the schools, the army the bullyboys, etc. but I could not say that this was any different from other situations that punks faced elsewhere. However, it did posses a particular underlying sinister characteristic which made addressing such relationships of power somewhat 'tricky' but in keeping with the rest of the populations constant negotiation of the sectarian situation."

But especially for anarchos, the anti-war, anti-violence, anti-government position was not mere lyrics sheets, but active ideology. With the instability of the political situation, to claim an anarchist position was more than just talk. Here, previous generations of anarchists were now confronted with new ideas that challenged their more conventional left wing responses.

Roy: "The 'anarchist' position at that time was basically to support the nationalist/republican position, however many key people from within these communities spoke out against what was happening at the time and influenced a core theme throughout the Anarcho-punk scene which sought to say fuck the whole lot of them. This was somewhat at odds with the orthodox anarchist ideological position, which was dominated by the left wing politics in mainland Britain and Ireland. I can't explain why it was not a religious war in a paragraph but sufficient to state that religion, politics, history, and culture were terms which influenced individual and community politics during the 'troubles' which in itself is a very problematic 'soft' term for armed conflict between a range of diverse groupings, who normally sought inflict pain on anyone that spoke out against or did not support their political position."

In fact, the validity of what was happening and being said in the anarcho punk scene around the world helped to redefine political action in Belfast. On the one had, it showed that all the issues they were confronting were relevant during civil war or not.

Roy, "Usual stuff, protests outside the American Embassy, political graffiti, super gluing stuff, opposing stag hunts and hare coursing, making people aware of the situations faced by many political prisoners throughout the world, supporting various issues, organizing marches through the city centre, economic sabotage (especially MacDonald's) drinking and talking with people to change their views and then expressing ourselves through lyrics and noise. Organizing at a community level, newssheets, advice centres, music projects, printing press, and festivals and at one stage standing for election on the local council as 'the All Night Party.'"

At the same time it gave them perspective on what was happening around them. The violence happening around them was just a manifestation of the corrupt power structures everywhere.

Roy: "No, the definitions of power were similar and in need of resistance and opposition. I don't think I ever recall anyone putting the life of an animal before that of a human being, however, I know of a lot of extremely courageous people who put their lives on the line for what they believed and aspired to change. There was never a distinction made (consciously) by people to uphold animal rights above human rights but I think there was a strong recognition that this unchallenged power relationship was unnecessary and symptomatic of the wider male-dominated power relationships that were/are still fucking the world over and therefore the political situations are similar. The 'troubles' conveniently masked (for a while) the bullshit male orientated romantic Irish Nationalism and Unionist triumphalism, which spawned the war we experienced. There was always urgency but that was a punk thing and nothing particular to Belfast, I guess 'speed' had a lot to do with that in the early days."

In a place as small as Belfast, the anarcho punk scene clung together for dear life. Inspired to do things for themselves, the band members set out to organize their own practice rooms and recording facilities for demo tapes.

Roy: "The rest of the band had recorded a number of practice sessions and later we got hold of a four-track to record some demo material for tape distribution. At that, time it was difficult to access recording facilities as most of the studios were run by tossers who over-produced everything so this also inspired us to set up our own practice room and studio which we did at Giro's in Donegal Street."

It was out of this small meeting place (which was both practice space and veggie restaurant) that the Warzone Collective was born.

Roy: "The Warzone Collective did not really exist but the concept allowed for a number of key developments to emerge from Belfast around that time. The bands who were organizing at that time brought together a number of key individuals who influenced the political, philosophical, and practical development of the Warzone Collective but this was simply a 'flag of convenience' to distinguish the grouping from any politically organized grouping (there were a lot of them around Belfast). The collective was born out of the aspirations of a few individuals who had been influenced by the anarchist movement elsewhere. The collective 'mirrored' actions, politics, and events, which reflected a wider 'collective' approach throughout Ireland, UK, Europe, and USA. The part I played was at an early stage in the formation of the collective but I quickly grew skeptical of the 'conservative' collective approach which many people were advocating at that time and sought to develop projects within various communities, which is what I did eventually achieve along with other like minded people many of whom were still part of the Warzone Collective."

The fact that the practice space, the venue, and even the veggie café were open for almost 20 years is a testament to the pragmatism of the Belfast punk scene.

Roy: "The collective sought to make interventions where possible in a range of political issues, bring people together through the sharing of knowledge, skills and thoughts. Provide an outlet for creative, artistic, and political expression via a range of mediums. Provide support for individuals, bands, and communities to explore alternative ways of thinking and engage in direct action against those who support injustice and ignored human rights.

"Grand in theory—different in practice, the collective sought to in some way challenge the sectarian situation in N. Ireland and particularly in Belfast. It was a loose collection of 'punks' who were either too young to have experienced the Harp Bar and the punk scene of the late 1970s or rejected the philosophies of the earlier punk movement. Compared to places like London or New York, punk in Belfast took on a 'realist' approach rather than an aesthetic or abstract position with people living with and negotiating sectarianism, violence and political injustices who sought to engage with and promote 'alternative' ways of thinking outside of the orange and green politics, which dominated our lives. This approach combined with the shitty housing/unemployment situation which saw a general decline of working class areas during the Labour years and then into the Conservative Thatcherite era gave people momentum to organize and resist the whole fucking lot of them!"

It was through this work that Toxic Waste became fast friends with Stalag 17. With the same level of adrenaline and restlessness, it seemed both bands were heading in the same direction.

Roy: "Belfast city had a small population of around 150,000, of those people only a small number were punk, so everyone knew everyone else and generally, it was a small but cohesive community. Petesy Burns from Stalag 17 had been around the early days of punk in the late seventies and he transcended that scene into the 'anarcho-punk scene' of the early eighties. Both Stalag 17 and Toxic Waste were two of the frontrunners for the anarcho scene and so we worked together and were friends with everyone at that time. I guess this was down to both bands enthusiasm to make some change to the deteriorating situation in Belfast, which at that time was experiencing the effects of the Hunger Strikes and the 'Shoot to Kill' policy of the police and army. As Stuart Bailey (music journalist) later commented in the film Big Time, 'the punk scene in Belfast was down to a handful of people who all knew each other' an over all numbers fluctuated around 30-100 people.

"It was cosy but dynamic and this led to the split 12" with Stalag 17 on Mortarhate, as we wanted to project unity rather than competition between bands in the Belfast scene."

By 1984, the anarcho scene was morphing quickly. Crass split that year and new versions of the message were taking form all around the UK. Into that growing sea of information, the first Toxic Waste record, a split 12" with Stalag 17, was released.

Roy: "We were trying to engage people in politics which rejected both of the political viewpoints of the nationalists and unionists in N. Ireland. There were left wing and socialist parties in Belfast but we advocated a rejection of the whole lot of them. They were for us the core of the political problem with their dogma and rhetoric, which kept us all in line for fear of the unknown. We wanted to explode these myths and challenge them directly rather that through some aesthetic or stylistic resistance—we wanted change for everyone's benefit and the freedom to express ourselves in anyway we saw fit."

The record, *The Truth Will Be Heard* was released as a split between Warzone and Mortarhate. But the manufacturing and distribution (not to mention some of the art) wound up being handled by the Conflict imprint.

Roy: "Conflict were making headway where Crass had left off and the inclusive nature of the compilation albums allowed for bands like us to get our message out to a wider audience. This was the motivation and a desire to tour. We did not know anyone from Mortarhate at that stage but we were good at making contacts with people and establishing links, which is what happened with Conflict and Mortarhate. It turned out to be a bit of a love/hate relationship, but with hindsight the whole scene in the UK was fraught with difficulties in trying to maintain a cohesive network that worked perfectly all the time. It did not but many of us were much too idealistic at that point to realize that our dreams and politics may never have the impact we hoped it would. Also we did not understand the realities of the 'business' side of anarcho-punk, which seems like a contradiction in terms but only with personal experience I learned that being active cost money and unless you are prepared to front the money yourself you need to find ways of generating and maintaining an income to allow you to keep going. We were young!"

As a first record, it's a more than respectable punk record with energy and a great use of dual vocals that seems so specific to anarcho punk and later early grindcore groups. But like most bands, the recording didn't much please them.

Roy: "We got a 'deal' with a guy who worked for the BBC and was trying to establish his own recording studio. I do not remember the guys name now but he was OK for BBC. He tried to steer us toward the 'overproduced' version, which he was used to, but we tried to get across some of the aggression and fear through the tracks which I think did not quite work the way we had hoped. However, it was a brilliant experience to know that you could actually form a band and cut you own record and it was not until this project that I realized the potential we all had to make an impact on Belfast/the world.

"I could not say that we were happy with it but we could live with it as we did not have the luxury of a record label or loads of money available to pay for the recording. We all chipped in some money and hoped for the best. The record was much more valuable as a mechanism which showed other people that they could do this too—it was DIY not EMI and people sussed that pretty quickly. The tracks were politically motivated and helped create discussion among people especially outside of Belfast in the country areas and small pockets of punks all over the place. After this, we began to organize our own gigs and the whole scene really took off!"

While somewhat unhappy with the situation at the time, this relationship with Mortarhate and Conflict wound up inspiring the group to do more and hit the road.

Roy: "We played throughout Ireland and across the UK as well as several tours of Northern Europe during the 1980s. We never made to the States as a band but I guess there is still time."

Touring was to be as pivotal as expected to a boy who had previously not left Northern Ireland.

Roy: "Probably the most enjoyable time of my adult life but this had its down side, which I eventually did not cope with very well.

"Being on tour was an education, you learned so much about other people and yourself. It shaped my personality and my political thinking, I became aware of the breadth and scope of the political movements in Europe/World and got to experience a wide range of situations I would not have otherwise been exposed to. I have never laughed so much and shared so many tears with so many different people. We found ourselves in numerous bizarre situations, which are hard to relate to a reader but some of these included:

"Strip searching at the German border when the sniffer dog jumped back out of the van because of the stench—we pissed ourselves laughing and the border guards could not comprehend why this was funny—we laughed all the way to Bremen.

"In Bremen we were greeted by an over enthusiastic group of punks who gave us a bottle of Tequila and I lost all track of reality, woke up several hours later on the stage with the audience waiting and promptly went into our set. After one song, the audience left the room and we all looked at each other. I thought I had fucked the set up but after a while, we followed the audience upstairs and out of the building.

"To a backdrop of a massive firework display, we watched for around an hour or so while a sea of punks confronted a group of hardcore Nazi skinheads who had come to smash up the gig. Someone was passing out acid, which thankfully I declined and was given a perk-me-up instead. We watched in awe as the Bremen punks annihilated the skinheads and were so organized they had dispatch riders on bikes relating information about the developments taking place on this piece of waste ground. This was truly bizarre set against the biggest firework display I have ever seen. When things died down and the all clear was given, we preceded back to the venue and to the downstairs cellar. Crates of beer were loaded at the front of the stage and we played our set, which was brilliant if I say myself. However, the punters wouldn't let us off the stage and we had to play the set all over again but in the end I convinced the crowd that they could sing much better that I could and it turned into a free for all jamming session. Bremen then became this adventure playground, which we inhabited for a few days and left with some of the most poignant memories from all the tours. The people were brilliant, the city was cool, and we never forgot 'Schaslich' who later OD'd on some concoction. It was hard to top Bremen but there were a few other events along the way.

"Amsterdam—we were asked to play this guys wedding reception in a squat called 'the Rat' I think we got too stoned and the guy was pissed off. Later we were robbed while all of us—yes, all eight people slept in the van. We think someone introduced some sleeping gas and ripped off everything we had from a bag I kept everything in, passports, money, socks—the lot!

"Antwerp—when the punks in Antwerp heard about the robbery they put on a gig for us in 'De Waag' and did a collection. They raised enough to get us back home and I we never forgot their solidarity - I eventually went there to live!

"France—we were headed back home late from a gig in Liege to the ferry terminal. It was foggy and everyone was asleep. I was driving and the roads were empty. I drove past what looked like a shape at the edge of the road but decided to continue. However, a nagging feeling got the better of me and I did a U-Turn on the carriageway and drove a few miles back up to the spot. After a short while, we came across a old couple that had veered off the road and into ditch. We got them out of the car safely and calmed them down. Later we all pulled their car back onto the dual carriageway and sorted them out. They could not speak a word of English and our French was bad. They kept thanking us and saying that the 'English' were their friends. We did not have the heart to explain that we were from Irelande du Nord! They tried to gave us money but we eventually accepted several kisses on the cheek and headed for the ferry.

"Finally, there was the 'Donegal Street Siege' when we were all arrested in Belfast for 'inciting a riot'. I wrote an article for *It Makes You Want To Spit* that describes the events in detail but this was the scariest moment for us as a band and later we were given a death warning by a paramilitary organization for our 'Daniel O'Donnell Must Die Tour.' Kept us on our toes!"

As was the case with Crass and Flux, Toxic Waste was under constant scrutiny from the powers-that-be due to their vocalizing unpopular political sentiments. But in this case, the Troubles did make an impact as death threats were that much more a reality.

Roy: "Yip! All the time but most of it was misplaced speculation induced by amphetamine sulphate and complimented by a healthy paranoia, which kept most people out of prison and an early grave."

With just a few bands in their scene, Toxic Waste soon became friends with another somewhat like-minded hardcore band called Asylum.

Roy: "Asylum was; Big Paul, Brain, Chuck and Spike the 'provie' from around the Holylands. They were shit hot and could have gone on to bigger and better things but with many bands in Belfast they found it hard, to keep going without a regular income and people drifted. Brian and big Paul lived up at Fleskwater farm in a commune for a while, Chuck found smack and Spike found Joan his future partner."

A three-way split LP was planned with Toxic Waste, Stalag 17, and Asylum. But by then, doing a second record with Mortarhate was out of the question.

Roy: "Umm, the Mortarhate relationship deteriorated with the release of *The Battle Continues* single, which was meant to be a fundraiser for the Warzone Collective who were struggling at that point. The collective (as far as I am aware) never received anything from the label and this set a rot into people's minds including myself about the nature of the anarcho-scene in the UK. There was a lot of anti-Conflict feeling generated and myself and Petesy tried to sort things out with Jungle Records who were Mortarhate's distributors. Eventually nothing really came of this but the damage had been done. People became really cynical and apathetic. Many people drifted into other activities, not just because of this but the whole atmosphere at the time was changing and people in Belfast felt that they had been shafted! Therefore, that is why we did not release the record on Mortarhate at that time. Subsequently the relationship with Conflict was mended along the way but I do not think anyone really trusted record labels ever again—even if they were associated with the anarcho scene."

We Will Be Free wound up being a group effort from the Warzone Collective with the help of Mortarhate's distributor, Jungle.

Roy: "Again, it was solidarity for a scene rather than join in the ego bullshit of being the best band, we were sick of that and we had fun at each other's gigs so it just made sense to collaborate on any record releases. More people got to hear of all three bands and the Warzone collective showed that we could work together and produce our own work the way we wanted."

The record is a powerful document with all three groups turning in their best recordings (Asylum's only recording as far as I know). Toxic Waste makes great use of marching drum rolls and fantastic vocal harmonies especially evident on "Tug Of War." The band was modest as ever.

Roy: "Petesy's thought provoking lyrics from Stalag 17 and the awesome musical talent of Asylum were inspirational; Toxic Waste was not bad either!"

With Toxic Waste turning in what turned out to be the title track, and another real highpoint of the record, "We Will Be Free" was as much an apt political statement as it was a declaration of identity to that moment in time.

Sadly, this would be the pinnacle moment of Toxic Waste's existence, as the group began the all to common slow fade into oblivion.

Roy: "The original line-up split because at that time in Belfast, there was a lot of tension around the punk scene and this took its toll on each of us at differing times. It was hard to maintain a personal life and a collective life and when both were intertwined this usually made for quite a cocktail of personal and political and often it was hard to distinguish between both. Patsy (vocals) left first and headed for the quiet life in the Irish countryside. Then Phil (bass player) went to Bristol (I think) but when he came back to Belfast things were quite different. Grub (drummer) disappeared off the scene and that left myself and Marty (guitar) doing other projects.

"I don't really think the band 'split up' more like we kind of slowly disintegrated and along the way lots of things changed for everyone."

After having a heated run in with the group DIRT, a middle ground was found to the point where Roy became very close with the group. Eventually he moved to England where he decided to put together a new version of Toxic Waste mostly to record the remaining songs.

Roy: "The *Belfast* LP was meant to be a finishing of unfinished business as by now the band had split and we never recorded a lot of our stuff, so I decided to do just that and put the band to rest for myself. It did not quite work out like that, as (Toxic Waste II) ended up on yet another tour of Europe and I had a hard time trying to distribute the record by myself."

To reproduce some version of the Toxic Waste sound, Deno from DIRT was recruited as second vocalist. While a very different sound from the original group, the result was still a powerful hardcore record much in the tradition of the Belfast incarnation.

Roy, "I think it was easier working with Deno and some friends at that time because I knew what I wanted to record and it was really just a case of trying to get the sound right. I was not happy with the finished album but I can still live with it like the other recordings. I never really understood until it was too late that the best people to record their own material is the band itself. Marty the guitarist from Toxic Waste was excellent at all of this and knew the technology. When you hire a studio you need to ensure the engineer is on your wavelength. With this album, he was not and so things were overproduced again. The Toxic edge is missing but otherwise I believe it is still a good album, which reflects changes and developments."

But with all his reservations about the recording, he can still appreciate the record even today.

Roy: "I like "Dear Little Dinosaur" and "Plastic Bullets," which the rest of the band did not particularly like when we played live. My twelve-string intro to "Belfast" was a poetic interpretation of my feelings about the place and the fact that I actually managed to put the record out by myself."

As it turned out, the record title wasn't so much a political statement of any sort so much as a bit or sentimentality.

Roy: "I was living with Richard the bass player from Dirt in a squat down near Brixton in London and I often felt homesick for the place and the people of Belfast. I did not realize at the time I would be living there again so soon otherwise I might have called the album 'Andalus Road.'"

Without a record label or a collective to release the record, Roy took the enterprise upon himself alone.

Roy: "There was no label, I just called it Belfast records because that was convenient. I think I may have entertained the notion of starting my own record label at that point but that quickly faded when I realized what this actually meant."

The record resulted in one last European tour this time with Deno on vocals. A one-time event, the group ended for good upon returning home. Roy soon found himself moving back to Northern Ireland and getting back involved with the punk scene. He soon started playing music again with Marty who had since joined the hardcore group Pink Turds In Space.

Roy: "My son being born, and moving back home. I later joined up with Marty and formed Bleeding Rectum as the last word on what was happening in

Belfast at that time—as I said before everyone in the scene felt they were being shafted and we kind of captured that sentiment. It was ironic, self-debasing, and fun!

"The other great development at that time was the Belfast gig collective who organized really cool concerts one of my favorites was the Neurosis gig at the Crescent Arts Centre—life changing stuff!"

In some ways that final record was a sad statement of wasted talent. The desire to make those songs available to the public and Roy's total belief in those songs led him to make that record even if it meant totally constructing a Frankenstein Toxic Waste and having to make the record all by himself. The band definitely seemed to have so much more to say with their biggest enemy ending up being time.

Roy: "Some regrets that we did not realize our full potential in fact, we had only got started, and everything disintegrated. Understanding that we existed in a truly remarkable period in a particularly difficult environment politically and this took its toll on people in different ways. Memories of personal differences with people which went too far which should have been resolved at an earlier stage. Images of some of the most wonderful people on the planet that we met and shared time with. Periods when the whole thing became a drunken blur and not so productive. A great sense of achievement that I was part of the ongoing development of punk in the 1980s and the fun times we all had playing pranks and fucking with the system. Sincere regret that I was the one who tore the last page out of Dougie Jameson's book *The Ragged Trouser Philanthropist* while we were on tour in Europe and I think this had a devastating effect on his future politics (sorry Dougie)."

Like so many other lifers, the people who were born to punk, Roy can verbalize the same ideological lines he could twenty years ago but now with a more personal meaning.

Roy: "I think we all must be the type of people who just wont take shit from anyone without some form of resistance and when you get a whole generation who learned from the early punk days that everything was possible then remarkable changes take place in people's lives which have a profound affect on global cultures usually in small ways but this can also manifest itself in massive demonstrations of resistance against those who dominate and control much of our daily life.

"I believe anarcho punk became the intellectual side of punk, which progressed from the raw emotion, and observational side of the early punk movement. Anarcho punk got right into the cracks and chipped away slowly methodically and in the words of Terri Hooley 'punk never died in Belfast it still exists and is a mindset of the people.' I believe this is true and that 'anarcho punk' is a difficult term to explain just like 'truth' or 'culture' it has many possible interpretations. What anarcho punk allowed us all to do was to embrace this 'mind-set' and to live out our lives in various ways with an underlying understanding that we can make a difference and that it's OK to get depressed or burned out now and again, no one is perfect and neither is the concept. However, we also have learned that when we do organize and work together then we can affect real change locally, nationally, and internationally, and that we can do this without any political party having control over us.

"For me personally, the whole punk/anarcho punk call-it-what-you-wish has been and still is an effective way to counter the shit we are forced to deal with all over the planet. Now that I am in a different social and cultural environment outside of N. Ireland, I can see how important we all were but that sadly (in my own opinion) the political situation now (under the terms of the peace process) has canonized the sectarian culture with the state recognizing and rewarding those people who have caused immense pain and numerous deaths which has affected so much of the population. This legitimization of the 'terrorist' means that any sane and reasonable voice of opposition is easily sidelined and if ever there was a time when N. Ireland needed some help out of the shit, it is now 2005!

"The world has bought into the notion that peace exists in N. Ireland while the reality is so very different. The atmosphere and politics is a reminder of the bad old days in the 1970s when you were either a 'prod' or a 'taig.' Many left wing organizations and liberal thinking activists embraced the surge of support that Sinn Fein has capitalized on. This culture can only fuel a binary response from the protestant/unionist/loyalist communities, which will in turn perpetuate the sectarian hatred and underlying culture of distrust, which exists. We were able to actively resist this situation because punk offered an alternative but now the situation has changed.

"I still believe that any form of resistance against both sets of bigots and ideologies is valid and worth pursuing, but I guess many of us who began that journey are now working on their own in different ways which suits the changes in their personal and private lives. I am saddened that much of our efforts have now disintegrated just as Toxic Waste did way back in the eighties. The Warzone Collective is gone, Giro's is closed, and the punk scene is back to organizing ad hoc events in various pubs around the city centre. There are and recently have been some great bands emerge from the punk scene in Belfast and I hope that people there can find a way to reinvigorate the scene once again. I wish them every success."

And at the end of the day it is by no means a cautionary tale.

Roy: "Yeah, a short rant! Punk is not a substitute for getting up off your arse and making a contribution to this world, that is something we should all aspire to as human beings. It does not matter that you do not succeed in everything you set out to do and it really does not matter what others may think of you so long as you can live with yourself. I was never someone who went along with the crowd and this applies to the punk scene too! There is no uniform, code, or proper punk way to look, think or act, just how every individual makes a unique contribution or act of resistance which helps shape their own and others lives.

"The real strength is in the persistence of this way of thinking, finding new ways to adapt or subtly make changes and the potential for new generations to pick up where others have left off—'punk's not dead' and it never will die so long as the concept works on an individual level!"

Acts of Sedition

Acts Of Sedition is a hardcore punk band from Oakland, CA. The members are Will: Bass/Vocals, Clint: Drums, Alex: Guitar/Vocals. For the past year they have been very active in the Bay Area punk community, not only playing local shows but also booking shows at their house: the Murda Dubbs Warehouse and have toured twice. They have a lot of positive and constructive things to say, and are generally great people to be around.

Interview by Dave Scattered.

How did the band start?

Clint: Well, Will and I have been playing in bands together for a long time. First with Live Ammo, and then Because Silence Is A Dangerous Sound. Acts Of Sedition basically formed to fulfill tour obligations that Because Silence Is A Dangerous Sound had. We booked a US tour as Because Silence and some of the members of that band realized that they couldn't go on it, but we wanted to tour anyway. So we basically formed a new band to go on tour. It ended up being me and Will and Alex.

Will: Alex was originally going to be filling in on guitar for Kenny, one of the members of Because Silence. So we practiced for a week when we found out that the other two guys couldn't go after we had already booked shows. We were getting ready for it, and they flaked out. Not that I'm bitter or anything.

Alex: There was no point in playing five piece songs with three people so we started a new band. Originally I was going to be the roadie, which is really funny, because I hated my job and wanted to leave.

Will: Dude, you fed punks with french fries everyday for a year.

You've been around for about a year, you have two demos out, and have toured the country once, and then another West Coast tour. To say the least, you've been very active as a band. That's not including local shows and shows you've booked at your house. So my question is, why stay so active?

Will: Because, well at least for me, I've stopped going to college to tour. I've been wanting to be in a real touring band ever since I started playing music. We already had the momentum from Because Silence, we had shows booked coast to coast for a month and decided to just do it because DIY hardcore is awesome. People were like, "Oh, it's a new band…whatever" and they let us play the shows anyway.

Clint: My reason for staying so active is that music isn't a job or a hobby for me; it's a life. A life sentence. It's like I don't have a choice anymore, I just have to keep going. But it keeps me sane somehow.

Well how was your tour? Are there any interesting stories?

(*Laughter all around.*)

Alex: No! Nothing whatsoever. It was very bland. We played the exact same set every night that was over in exactly 15 minutes.

Alex: Actually a lot of shit happened and I'd say my best memory was, well lets see…top three. Number one: In Philly, getting way too wasted and puking on the penguin suit and I think I kissed some girls but don't really remember.

Will: And stole wax beans from that house.

Alex: I stole wax beans from that house, and I danced in the penguin suit in some random house to music. Yeah…awesomeness.

Clint: They were playing a Slayer CD after the bands were done, and we just kept moshing, as if the show was still going on.

Alex: Number two would be playing my first naked show in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Number two-which is actually number one-would be my birthday in Reno. They made me food, and I met the girl I want to marry because she had a stack of Marvel cards. It totally ruled. Tour was totally awesome, and it was better than the last tour I was on, which was the Blottos tour. That was the same amount of time and same amount of shows, but so many more people in the van. It was a lot more chaotic and a lot more bullshit.

Will: A lot more yellow jackets. (*Laughter*)

Alex: Yeah, a lot more of that. Yellow jackets, someone else being on Special K while walking down Bourbon Street. So yeah, this tour ruled.

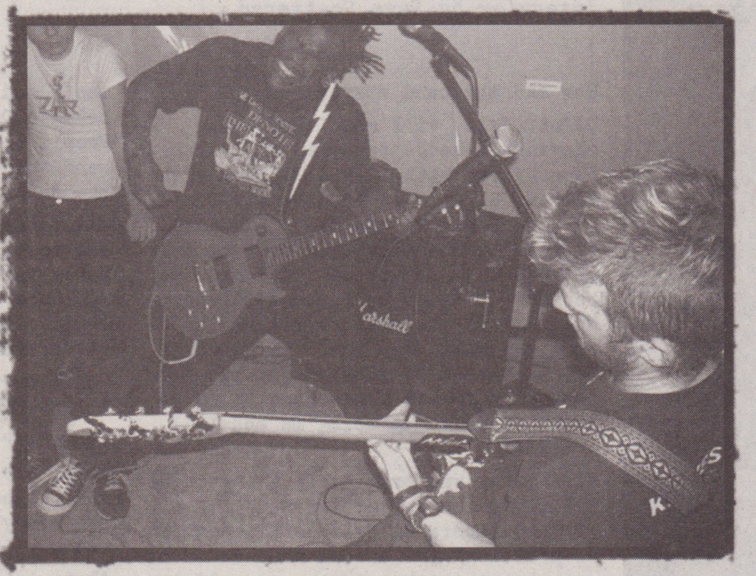
Will: A lot more memories, and a lot of new friends. A lot of fantastic bands that we played with.

Clint: To put it more concisely, we had about a month on the road. We had a lot of days off because we didn't really know what we were doing as far as booking, but the days we did play were totally cool. In general, we made the entire thing more difficult by coming up with this bizarre set of rules that we had to follow. One of which included wearing this stupid penguin suit on various occasions. Those occasions included driving, going to the liquor store, drinking, and eating at Waffle House.

Will: Yeah, it was a new rule for every day, and by the end of it I think it had really just become ridiculous. We all hated that penguin suit so much. It was hilarious, and I loved having it, but Jesus Christ did it feel good to throw that thing away. Thank you Lucy for the penguin suit.

So how are things different in other parts of the country–for good or for bad?

Alex: I find that compared to here a lot of places around the country just for punk rock have it worse off. We have so many fucking bands, and so much that we're exposed to that no one person is going to know every band that another person knows. We can pick and choose what shows we are going to go to on any given night. There's always something happening in the Bay Area. Where as other places... we showed up to Montana and we were what was happening. That was it. You know there's nothing going on, probably in the rest of the state. You know, kids have to work a lot harder to even have a scene let alone get other bands like out of town bands to come play there. I find it interesting that the way bands from different places sounded, just because of the exposure that they have had to punk. Like in Montana, people there obviously haven't heard of Ludicra or, you know, other bands like them, so they were a lot poppier. But to them, that was their fucking punk rock. It was just interesting to see.



Will: The flip side of being in such a large and well-established scene is that there's a lot of subdivisions and separations here in the Bay Area. Where there's a crust scene, a grind scene, a thrash scene…a lot of these kids don't go to other shows. Where as if you're in Montana or rural Illinois or wherever the hell else we played…a thrift store in Minnesota you show up to see whatever is happening, therefore you get a much wider spectrum of people at your shows. We saw quite a few Slipknot shirts, but just as many Tragedy t-shirts when we went to major cities.

Do you sing about anything in particular, or is it more like whatever comes to mind when you guys get together when you practice.

Will: Random word generator from the Internet. No, actually I wrote about half of the lyrics and Clint wrote about half. A lot of it Clint and I had discussions in our old band about wanting to be a political band because in Because Silence I was writing lyrics for songs that I wasn't comfortable singing because I knew the other guys didn't feel the same way. As an example, our old bass player from Because Silence... his new band just played ten dates on Warped Tour. Which is something that I am diametrically opposed to. You know, they're still punk kids, but their politics lay differently. I might be singing but I am also representing the band as a whole, and I don't want to sing about things that other people in the band don't agree with. I don't drink but I'm not going to write a song about why drinking is fucked up because both Clint and Alex drink and that's not appropriate. When we wrote the demo we wrote music so fast and we were getting ready for two months from the moment we started the band until we left for tour. A lot of the lyrics came out of "What have I not written a song about?" because I didn't know where people stood on issues. I know where Clint stands and I know where Alex stands and any time there is confusion, we discuss it. There are a lot of things from the arms race and build up of the military-industrial complex. The fact that we're facing a constant possibility of nuclear holocaust is absolutely absurd so we wrote a song about that. Just about fucked up shit that you see every day or things you think about in the bigger picture that I/we feel need to be discussed more. I mean sure, it's a punk band and a lot of it is leftist political discussion and a lot of it is ground that has been tread before–probably more eloquently–but that doesn't mean all of these problems aren't problems that we still face. The inspiration to write these songs is still there.

Clint: I like writing lyrics for Acts Of Sedition because it's pretty much the only outlet that I have for writing political lyrics and I feel strongly about all these issues. It's pretty much an endless source of inspiration as far as punk rock lyrics go. All I have to do is open up a newspaper or watch TV for five minutes and I have something new that pisses me off that I want to write a song about. I am also influenced by history and psychology, and other nerdy stuff like that.

You guys have been described as sounding like Tragedy or Caustic Christ, which to me sounds completely different. My question is do you, or are you interested in, bringing anything new to DIY punk and hardcore?

Clint: The sad truth is that there is nothing new that anyone can bring. It's a dead end branch of the rock and roll tree.

Will: I would like to say that *MRR* definitely used the words thrash and Neurosis in the same sentence while describing us, and I think that's absolutely hilarious because I don't see how that's possible.

Clint: They probably meant early Neurosis.

Will: Well, I just outed myself as the only person in Oakland who doesn't listen to them.

Alex: One thing I really fucking like about this band is when I listen to us, sure I hear little bits of this band and that band, but for the most part I don't get how we wrote this song and it came out like this. I mean, it doesn't sound like anything that any of us listen to, or anything that I can think of. I really enjoy the music that we write, I like actually being in this band more than any other band that I've been in. So hopefully we are bringing something new to DIY hardcore.

Will: I think it's also that we have really different tastes. Clint plays drums for Hotblack Desiato, a self-described stoner metal band. I've played in pop punk bands, and Alex has the most extensive collection of Latin Dance music that I've ever seen. You throw that together and you hear Caustic Christ? It's weird but it's totally true, and I think it's a lot of the reason why we sound the way we do, at least for me... There's nothing more fun than playing a minute long song at Mach 3, running around the whole time screaming your fucking balls off, but then, right when you're about to collapse from how much energy you've expended, you're OK because the song's over.

Alex: Exactly.

What would you like to see changed in the DIY punk scene?

Will: More black t-shirts.

Alex: I find that a lot of older people seems to have this ridiculous disregard for younger people. Working at Gilman, there's these kids, "Gilman Rats," and older people treat them like total shit as opposed to attempting to talk to them or try and get them involved. Instead of giving them flyers for shows they assume that they're dumb and drunk on the corner. Well, my response is... so were you 10 years ago. What makes you better then them?

Will: Because I'm older and I say so.

Will: I largely agree with that statement but I also think that there seems to be an awful lot of finger pointing and division over it. Punk is a microcosm of the political left. You know the creation of punk was a political act. Operating outside of the major music industry is a political act, and I see a lot of it. Gilman is losing money and touring bands aren't getting what they need to financially exist as a touring band. They aren't even going to be able to break even because there is not enough money at the door to pay two or three touring bands or whatever, so the show is going to be $6 or $7 because there are a bunch of touring bands, and kids saying fuck that and just not going to Gilman anymore. They bitch and complain and talk shit rather than, for example, getting involved or starting their own venue. Because it's always a lot easier to complain and point fingers than *do it yourself*, which is kind of the entire point of punk rock. You know, I see a place for Gilman and I also see a place for house shows. We have shows here, and every time the entire door goes to the bands. That's because we live here, we have jobs and we pay rent. So people need to realize that as much as we don't like it, there is a financial aspect to the music industry. Outside of it as we may be, everything costs money. It's kind of a pain in the ass. It fucking sucks to think about. I hate thinking that I go through a new pack of strings and it's going to be $25, which is two hours of my life after taxes spent working. I realize that for a door price, it's the same thing for people who perhaps aren't as lucky as I am to have as well a paying job as I do. But, when you're on the road this is the only money you're getting. A lot of people are coming from minimum wage jobs because they've been on tour and they come home and they only have two months before they leave for tour again. They're working a minimum wage shit job making $6 an hour and paying rent on top of it and trying to save money. Then they go out on tour and if kids are boycotting shows because it's $7, I think that's bullshit because the only people they're hurting are punks.

Alex: Even more bullshit than that is people who won't go to a $7 show but will then go and spend the money on beer with the $2 extra they would have spent on the show.

Do you have any future plans?

Clint: No, never.

Will: We're breaking up right now.

Alex: Interview over.

(*Laughter all around.*)

Will: We are putting out a split LP with Bafabegiya from Reno, NV-the greatest little scene that ever existed. We will be going on a US tour with them probably for three weeks. I think we're going to Florida and back. That will be right around Christmas, so if you see seven kids wearing all black looking really smelly with a small dog pouring out of a van somewhere around Texas or Louisiana on Christmas you should say fuck you to the family and come hang out with us. We'll watch the sun rise over the Mississippi river.

Alex: Also, hopefully just hella more records. Putting out as much as we possibly can. Writing all sorts of new shit. All sorts of bands that we love and want to put records out with. Hopefully that will happen.

Will: Sadville from Tennessee, Greyskull from Tacoma, Washington, Skeleton Closet from Santa Cruz-all these are bands that we are either talking about or would love to do records with in the future. Hopefully touring and playing many more shows with.

Alex: The reason I fucking love this band is because when we started this band we were like, "Oh, you know, we're going on tour, going to make new friends hahaha," and now we are and I don't fucking get it. All these bands that are so much better than us, that are so fucking good are willing to help us out, willing to do shows for us, willing to put us up in their homes. They let us play Halo two until five in the morning. All sort of crazy bullshit like that.

Will: You mean let *you* play Halo two until five in the morning.

Alex: Yeah.

Do you guys have any final comments, anything that you'd like to say?

Will: Someone, put out our 7". Give us patches to sew onto my dog's black denim vest while we're on tour.

Alex: Come to our show and say hi, because we need more people to hang out with.

Clint: I'm gonna bring a sleeping bag on the next tour.

Will: If you're pissed because there's no good shows in your town, throw them in your basement… We'll miss you Blake.

WESTERN ADDICTION

For a bunch of guys who go out of the way to say how much they patently suck as a band, Western Addiction should be much worse. Such self-effacement isn't usually a sign of a confident band—usually. But perhaps it's just because all of these guys have been around the gnashing gears of the punk rock music machine for such a long time and seen where the real, long-term mistakes lie—mistakes as obvious to them as a trench roiling with shit and full of dying, bile-bloated dreams. They've seen first hand their share of egotistic, "can that chorus become a ringtone on my cell?" douchebag bands lose all integrity and direction in exchange for full-sleeve tattoos, endless talk about "moving units," and preteen girls flashing their boobs at the Warped Tour. It all comes back to a real simple equation. Can you play music that means something more than just what can be bought and sold? Does it mean dick after all the instruments are unplugged? Elks Club punk. Duct-tape-and-guitar-string-holding-on-the-muffler punk. Western Addiction play it unaffected, like how it came out in the early 1980s, while not ignoring the past twenty-five years. Overall: fast, but with a melody. Think of the die cast by bands like Articles of Faith, Black Flag, and Really Red and polished by Kid Dynamite and Strike Anywhere. Quick, genuine, and meaningful stabs. Interview by Dan Glen Fury

MRR: Chad, any advice on bullet belts? I stopped wearing them because they always put holes in the bottom of my t-shirts and I refuse to tuck my shirt in.
Jason: Please ask Chad why he wears two belts at a time and how this came in handy one day.

MRR: Chad?
Chad: For the record, I have never worn a bullet belt. Lemmy should hold the patent on that. But yeah, I wear two belts. So fucking what? I have for eight years and I fear change. Jason is referring to the time I brought the band a suitcase for merch from the Mission Street Goodwill store. I went out to my motorcycle and realized I had no way of getting it home. I used belt number two to tie down the suitcase.

MRR: So, Ken, you're in two bands. Is Enemy You just a hobby now?
Ken: No, Enemy You is the real money-maker. Western Addiction is about pride, not success and profit.

MRR: How did headlining Scott Alcoholocaust's birthday go? Explain to the readers how Scott is one of the patron saints of San Francisco DIY punk rock.
Jason: We haven't actually played it yet but I predict it will be face-melting. I plan on blowing out the candles with massive wind-generating riffs. By "massive wind-generating riffs," I mean barely keeping in time and inventing a few new chords as we play. I prefer the "R" chord, according to my band mates. Scott is very important to the scene because he books tons of shows, he knows his stuff, and is very organized. If you see him at a show, he is always having a good time and he fancies a drink. He's

no "One Can Jan." And you'd think he is a crazy punker, which he is, but he always has his stuff together and he has offered us a lot of shows and has been very generous to our band. He reminds us that when he first saw us play we sucked something ferocious, but now we just kind of suck and I think he secretly likes us. He loves music and he always seems very happy which I admire.

MRR: Why does Hot Dog (of San Francisco's Radio Reelers) go so far as to say, in print, that Western Addiction is one of the worst bands he's ever seen?
Jason: We're pretty bummed that a guy named "Hot Dog" thinks we are wankers. I heard his brother "Bagel Dog" really likes our band though, so it evens out. Also, if he is referring to the tightness of our live set and to the songs we write, then he's got another....uh...he's pretty much right.
Ken: Because we don't have that Radio feelin'.
Chad: Considering that the howlin' Hot Dog plays in one of the loosest, drunkest, out-of-tunest rock and roll bands on the planet, what he said takes balls. He's probably just jealous. He's worried that I'll quit his fun little rock and roll band once *Cognicide* becomes the uplifting soundtrack to millions of people's dreary lives.

MRR: Why is pride more important than success and profit?
Ken: It really isn't. It just sounds really fucking cool when you bark shit out like that.
Jason: We certainly don't play for dollars and I try never to let that creep in to the decision-making process. I have been around lots of bands, and when money starts dictating your decisions, things get weird. Also I think I measure success in different increments. In my eyes, we already succeeded because we put out a 7" and played a show. Everything else that comes along has just been incredibly lucky to me and I am thankful. If I get a few laughs and get to play some jams with my pals then I'm good. That line from the song ("The Church of Black Flag") relates more to artists who make art because they are naturally compelled to: it's in their blood and sometimes it goes against common sense and financial gain.

MRR: Anyone, except Chad: Have you ever masturbated with your guitar or bass strapped on?
Jason: I have not. My money's on Chicken. We make fun of him for being vain all the time. One time at practice I wrote out a list of "to do" things for him and it included "lift weights and look at self in mirror." You know that he, for sure, does it Bon Jovi Style with the guitar on his back with the strap across his chest. On a steel horse he rides.
Ken: All the time, with Chad. Chad likes to watch us. I've also seen Jason do it before. I thought he had his instrument strapped on, but it wasn't. It was just his monstrous wee donger.

MRR: Who have you put on your thank you list that you wish you could really take back off and what'd they do?
Jason: Floyd. He's our self-appointed manager and he said he would take us to the top if we took a "clear bath" (no bubbles) with him.

MRR: Chad, you've always had great, longish, spiky hair, even in the most adverse of situations. Any tips?
Jason: Ken combs it for him. You know that Chad is up all night just putting rollers in and flat-ironing it.
Chad: You know, you hear lots of talk about using egg whites, Knox Gelatin, and other food substances in the spiking and 'hawking of hair, when it's actually pretty simple. All you need is a two-dollar bottle of maximum strength Aquanet and a blow dryer. Up the punx! *[laughs]*

MRR: As a band, you're practically Canadian–you've all got good jobs, all have health plans, and profit sharing. You've done yoga in the studio to warm up with. What've you got to be so angry about? I mean, you guys sound angry. You're not playing love ballads to lady friends.
Chad: Just because our daily lives are generally okay, there's plenty to be pissed off at. The overall stupidity of 99% of society, Starbucks, PBR that costs more than $2 a pint, the superficiality of the "punk" scene, Good Charlotte, the escalating corporate domination of every facet of our lives, Hot Topic, the evolution from music as an art form to music as a commodity, the astronomical rent in San Francisco, fucking crackheads stealing spark plugs from my motorcycle, George W. Bush, Converse All Stars being manufactured overseas by fucking Nike...shall I continue?

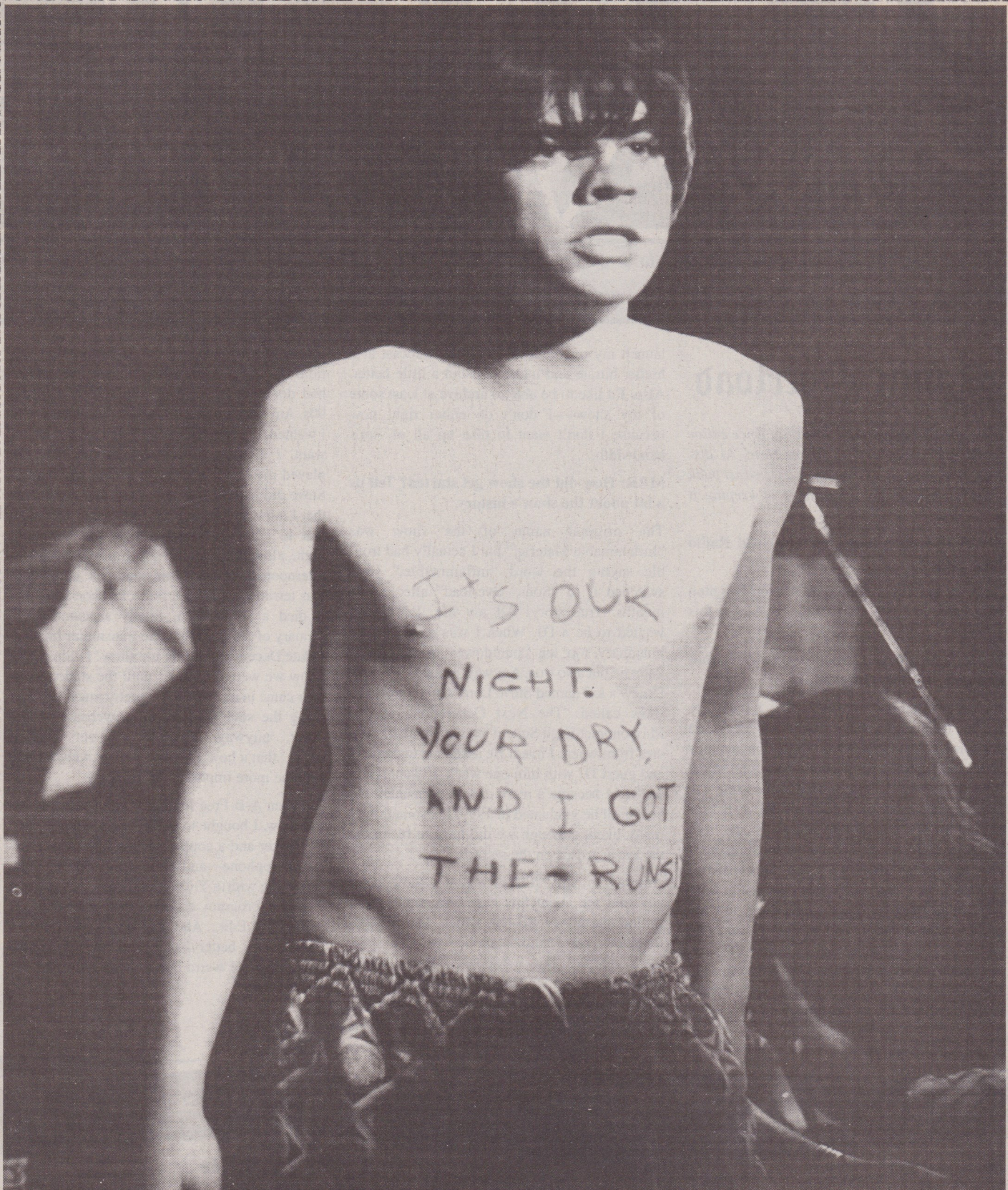
from the vaults...

econochrist

JECT REFUSE

dirt

all photos: martin sorrondeguy


IT'S OUR
NIGHT.
YOUR DRY,
AND I GOT
THE RUNS!

zero boys

WE WANT THE AIRWAVES

Corporate consolidation and greed don't have to be the final words on the matter of media. There are people all over the world taking back the airwaves for DIY punk and politics. If you are involved with DIY or punk radio, please send us your story!

Sonic Overload

is a radio show hosted by Suburban Voice editor (and MRR columnist) Al Quint. Here, Al discusses the intricacies ofrunning a web-cast punk radio show and, the importance of keeping it DIY.

MRR: How long has Sonic Overload Radio been going?

It started in March of 2000 on Allston-Brighton Free Radio in Boston. So about six years, at this point.

MRR: How do you broadcast now? Is that how you've always broadcast?

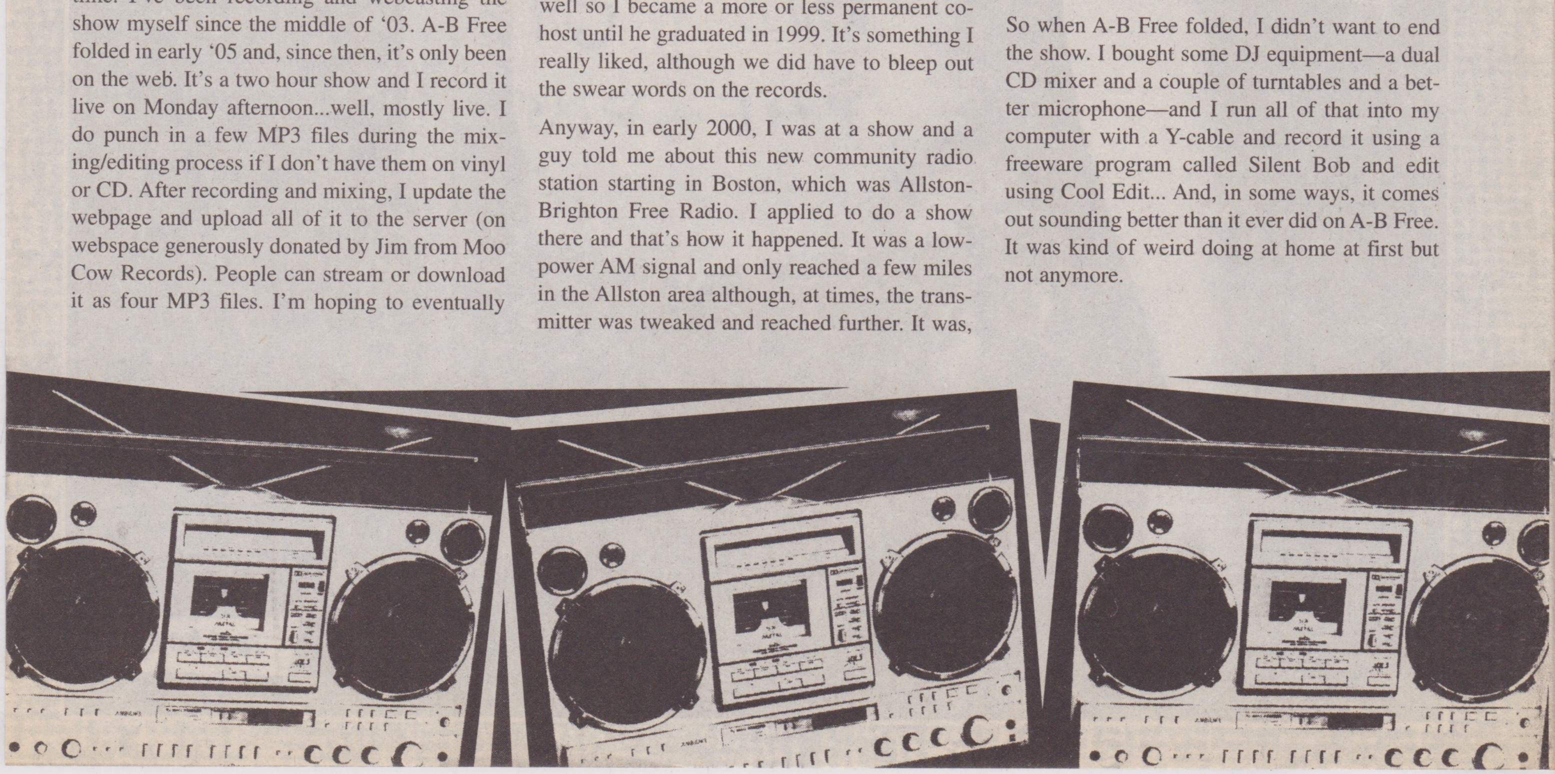
It's an internet-only program that I record at home. It started as an on-air broadcast on Allston-Brighton Free Radio in Boston and they also had a webcast but it didn't work a lot of the time. I've been recording and webcasting the show myself since the middle of '03. A-B Free folded in early '05 and, since then, it's only been on the web. It's a two hour show and I record it live on Monday afternoon...well, mostly live. I do punch in a few MP3 files during the mixing/editing process if I don't have them on vinyl or CD. After recording and mixing, I update the webpage and upload all of it to the server (on webspace generously donated by Jim from Moo Cow Records). People can stream or download it as four MP3 files. I'm hoping to eventually launch my own website so I can webcast at a higher bitrate and make it sound a little better. Also, I'd like to be able to archive at least some of my shows—I don't do either right now because I don't want to take up all of Jim's bandwidth.

MRR: How did the show get started? Tell us a bit about the show's history.

The original name of the show was "Inflammable Material" but I actually had trouble saying the word "inflammable," so I switched it to "Sonic Overload" after a few months. True story! All my life, I'd always wanted to be a DJ. When I was a kid, I'd do imaginary top ten countdowns in my room. Pathetic but also true. Anyway, around '98 or so, I knew a kid named Steve Lord who co-hosted a show called "The Next Generation" on the Masconomet High School station about 20 minutes from where I lived. He asked me to come in and guest DJ with him one week. It went really well so I became a more or less permanent co-host until he graduated in 1999. It's something I really liked, although we did have to bleep out the swear words on the records.

Anyway, in early 2000, I was at a show and a guy told me about this new community radio station starting in Boston, which was Allston-Brighton Free Radio. I applied to do a show there and that's how it happened. It was a low-power AM signal and only reached a few miles in the Allston area although, at times, the transmitter was tweaked and reached further. It was, for all intents and purposes, a pirate radio station. Steve Provizer, who founded the station, had done the pirate Radio-Free Allston in the 90s. Anyway, I was able to do my show the way I wanted, uncensored, playing and saying what I want. I didn't curse on the air (usually) but played my music uncensored. The only request Steve did make while he was at the station was that I move my show from its original afternoon slot to early evenings, which I did comply with...although when he left, I moved it back to afternoons. Anyway, the station's equipment was terrible, it ran on a financial shoestring and it died a slow death, finally succumbing in January of 2005. In fact, the transmitter blew up in late December, during my show! I didn't even know we were off the air until the station manager came in and told me. I pretty much was just using the station to record a webcast at that point, anyway, because of our limited range...that's how I viewed it. The webcast had become more important to the show.

So when A-B Free folded, I didn't want to end the show. I bought some DJ equipment—a dual CD mixer and a couple of turntables and a better microphone—and I run all of that into my computer with a Y-cable and record it using a freeware program called Silent Bob and edit using Cool Edit... And, in some ways, it comes out sounding better than it ever did on A-B Free. It was kind of weird doing at home at first but not anymore.



MRR: What is some of the kind of stuff you play? Is it all punk rock? What is the criterion you use to judge whether or not you'll play a song?

It's mostly punk, hardcore, and garage... a mix of old and new. My show probably skews more towards older music but I play new music, as well. The criterion is whether or not I like it. Simple as that. I also throw in some change-ups on occasion—I'll play a hard rock or metal song I liked from when I was a teenager, more new-wavish stuff, even a hip-hop song once in awhile. I also try to not repeat things too much. There are some bands I play frequently because they're favorites but I dig for obscure music, as well. I do avoid playing anything that's overtly religious or "spiritual," for want of a better term, although one could argue I break that rule by playing Bad Brains or Cro-Mags. And, of course, if it's blatantly sexist, racist or homophobic, it's not going to get played.

MRR: You've been involved in DIY punk for a long time. How important is it to play new stuff versus playing just older stuff?

It's very important to play new music, especially because I think underground/DIY punk and hardcore have really become revitalized in recent years. It's interesting—you'll hear a lot of music from the late 70s and early 80s, then music from recent years on my show, but not a lot from, say, the mid 80s to late 90s. Occasionally, I'll play some music from the latter period but I suppose I'm more interested in playing what I loved when I was getting into punk and hardcore because that really inspired me, and I'm interested in playing the newer music that continues to inspire me. So I try to create a balance—cover all of it, as best as I can. I kind of look at the program as presenting the different music I like and want to force on, uh, share with others...

MRR: You have also done a zine—*Suburban Voice*—for quite a long while. What are some of the differences for you in doing a print zine and doing the radio show? Do you do them for the same reasons, or do focus on different stuff for each?

It's kind of the same reason—a way to share the music that I love, whether it's writing about it or playing it on the show. I suppose it's a crusade of sorts. I suppose I've always been kind of a punk evangelical, even though I'm not a religious person—know what I mean, though? But this is music that keeps me going, that means a lot to me and I want to share it with others, whether it's through writing or playing it on the show. Putting together a radio show, even with it taking most of Monday between pulling the music, sequencing it, etc. is a lot easier than doing a zine. There's an immediacy to it—I put it on-line and within hours I'm getting feedback about it.

MRR: Is your show all music, or are there other aspects as well (i.e. politics, ranting, commentary, etc.)?

It's mostly music. I back-announce the songs, and try to provide some information about the bands/records. Sometimes, though, I'll rant or offer my opinion because I have strong viewpoints on social/political issues and when something pisses me off, I can't let it pass without comment. Occasionally, I'll find soundclips and edit it into the show, leading into a song, or do theme sets, whether about Bush's latest transgressions or the attack on gay rights or reproductive choice or other issues. One of the most popular shows I ever did was my Reagan "tribute" show that I did a few days after he died where I basically played two hours of every anti-Reagan song I could find. There were a lot to choose from, believe me! Still, I don't have the best voice and I sometimes stutter or my voice cracks so it's hard to talk for an extended period of time, but I try to make it more than just the music. That's the main emphasis, it's what people tune in for, but I don't ignore what's going on in the world or in my area...

MRR: Why do DIY radio at all?

One thing I insist on is having complete control over my work—whether it's writing or doing a radio show. I don't want any outside interference, anyone telling me what I can or can't do and no one changing it or altering it. Control freak? Perhaps...but at this point, I think I'm my own best editor. Sure, mistakes can be made, but I'll live with them. Anyway, it just ties into my desire to do it myself. I did have the freedom to do the show the way I wanted while on Allston-Brighton Free Radio and I suppose this is the next logical step. I enjoy the process of taking all day Monday to select the music, create a playlist, record it, edit it and upload it by myself. And it's gratifying when people listen to the show and say they love the music I play and appreciate the effort. Even if it was only ten people listening, I'd still find it worthwhile.

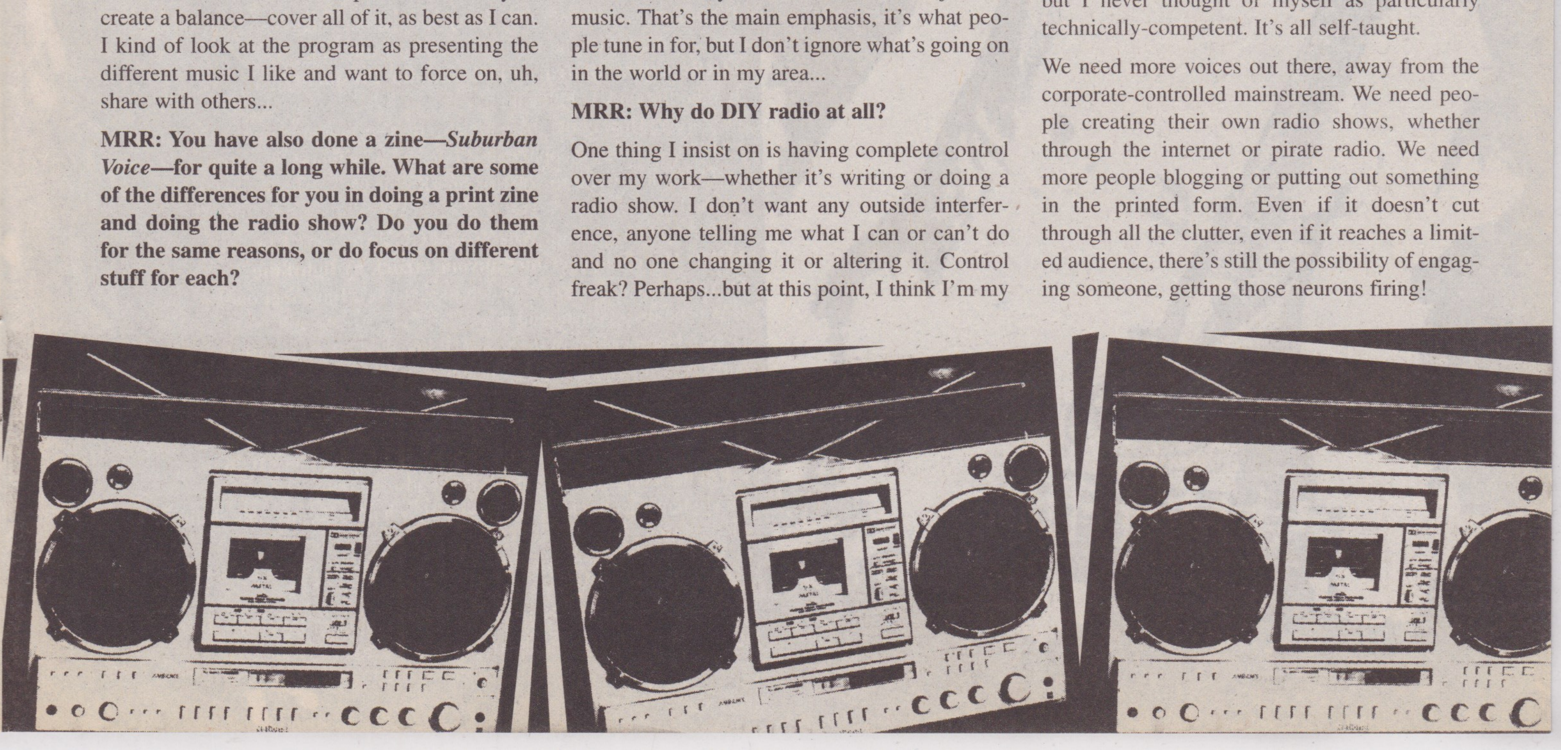
MRR: How can people get in touch with you? Do you take requests, etc?

They can find the show on the web at http://sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com (no "www" in there). They can email me at sonicoverload@earthlink.net. I do take requests but try to keep them creative! If you email a request for Blink-182 or some crappy emo band, you may get a pretty sarcastic reply. Also, there's nothing lamer than a band or label requesting I play their music. If I like it, I'll play it and asking me to do it isn't going to help...

MRR: Any last words or thoughts (on punk, DIY media, etc?)

It's an overused quote from Jello but "become the media." Sure, oftentimes, one has to have the resources to be able to do it, I suppose and that becomes a class issue. I laid out over $700 to buy the equipment that I use to record the show, I do have a computer and acquired other elements by "other" means. Not everyone can do that. But if I can somehow patch this show together, anyone can do it. Maybe I got the aptitude from my dad (RIP), who was an engineer, but I never thought of myself as particularly technically-competent. It's all self-taught.

We need more voices out there, away from the corporate-controlled mainstream. We need people creating their own radio shows, whether through the internet or pirate radio. We need more people blogging or putting out something in the printed form. Even if it doesn't cut through all the clutter, even if it reaches a limited audience, there's still the possibility of engaging someone, getting those neurons firing!



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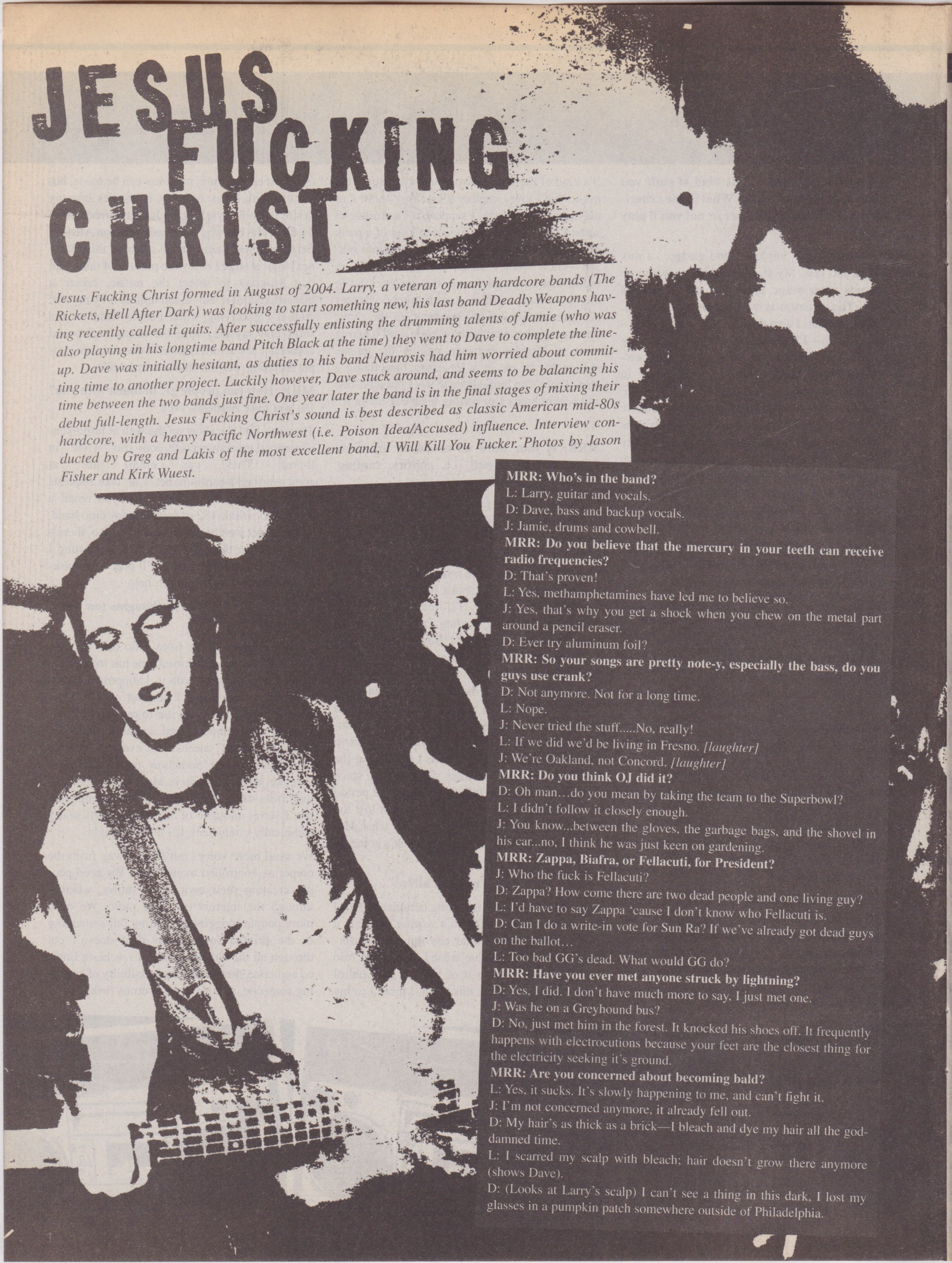

Jesus Fucking Christ formed in August of 2004. Larry, a veteran of many hardcore bands (The Rickets, Hell After Dark) was looking to start something new, his last band Deadly Weapons having recently called it quits. After successfully enlisting the drumming talents of Jamie (who was also playing in his longtime band Pitch Black at the time) they went to Dave to complete the line-up. Dave was initially hesitant, as duties to his band Neurosis had him worried about committing time to another project. Luckily however, Dave stuck around, and seems to be balancing his time between the two bands just fine. One year later the band is in the final stages of mixing their debut full-length. Jesus Fucking Christ's sound is best described as classic American mid-80s hardcore, with a heavy Pacific Northwest (i.e. Poison Idea/Accused) influence. Interview conducted by Greg and Lakis of the most excellent band, I Will Kill You Fucker. Photos by Jason Fisher and Kirk Wuest.

MRR: Who's in the band?
L: Larry, guitar and vocals.
D: Dave, bass and backup vocals.
J: Jamie, drums and cowbell.

MRR: Do you believe that the mercury in your teeth can receive radio frequencies?
D: That's proven!
L: Yes, methamphetamines have led me to believe so.
J: Yes, that's why you get a shock when you chew on the metal part around a pencil eraser.
D: Ever try aluminum foil?

MRR: So your songs are pretty note-y, especially the bass, do you guys use crank?
D: Not anymore. Not for a long time.
L: Nope.
J: Never tried the stuff.....No, really!
L: If we did we'd be living in Fresno. *[laughter]*
J: We're Oakland, not Concord. *[laughter]*

MRR: Do you think OJ did it?
D: Oh man…do you mean by taking the team to the Superbowl?
L: I didn't follow it closely enough.
J: You know...between the gloves, the garbage bags, and the shovel in his car...no, I think he was just keen on gardening.

MRR: Zappa, Biafra, or Fellacuti, for President?
J: Who the fuck is Fellacuti?
D: Zappa? How come there are two dead people and one living guy?
L: I'd have to say Zappa 'cause I don't know who Fellacuti is.
D: Can I do a write-in vote for Sun Ra? If we've already got dead guys on the ballot…
L: Too bad GG's dead. What would GG do?

MRR: Have you ever met anyone struck by lightning?
D: Yes, I did. I don't have much more to say, I just met one.
J: Was he on a Greyhound bus?
D: No, just met him in the forest. It knocked his shoes off. It frequently happens with electrocutions because your feet are the closest thing for the electricity seeking it's ground.

MRR: Are you concerned about becoming bald?
L: Yes, it sucks. It's slowly happening to me, and can't fight it.
J: I'm not concerned anymore, it already fell out.
D: My hair's as thick as a brick—I bleach and dye my hair all the goddamned time.
L: I scarred my scalp with bleach; hair doesn't grow there anymore (shows Dave).
D: (Looks at Larry's scalp) I can't see a thing in this dark, I lost my glasses in a pumpkin patch somewhere outside of Philadelphia.

J: Can we get back to the lightning thing?

All: Yes.

J: If anyone out there reading this interview has a video of someone being struck by lightning and having their shoes fly off, can you send it to us? For scientific purposes of course, we wouldn't find something like that funny or anything.

L: Send it to the address at the end of the interview!

MRR: Speaking of records, do you guys have any records out?

D: We have a five-song demo available for a dollar, in person. Two dollars post-paid anywhere in the world.

L: We're currently working on our full-length.

MRR: Who writes the material?

D: Mostly Larry.

L: So far mostly me, but they—Dave and Jamie—always help. Especially with the arrangement of songs. Lately it's been pretty equal with input. I'll have a basic idea for a song and Dave and Jamie end up rearranging the parts, which is what I prefer. On our record, we'll all have equal songwriting credits.

MRR: Analog, digital, or both when recording?

L: I tend to prefer analog, but I think the digital recording we just did sounds fucking awesome. Digital may not be better than analog in sound, but it's certainly much better than it used to be. Greg (our interviewer) and his partner Sal recorded us.

J: I would have to vote for analog in regards to sound, but digital makes being in the studio so much more pleasant, much easier and quicker.

D: (To Greg) How come you don't have a sixteen track reel-to-reel machine?

MRR: We'll get one at some point, for sure. Speaking of recording, I know Dave has been involved with making and using noise on records, do you guys plan on or currently use any noise in your songs?

L: We added a couple sound effects, such as a saw blade on our demo.

D: So far it's been pretty cut and dry punk rock. I don't use any effects on my bass for this band—I just plug the bass straight into the amp. I dunno, interesting question, we'll wait and see what the future holds.

L: Jamie's adding an ice-bell and tambourine on our full-length, does that count?

D: Not to mention the three-octave, 36-cowbell cowbell tree (all laugh).

MRR: What is the first piece of music you ever bought?

D: I bought a K-Tel compilation. It had "Disco Duck' on it, and "Evil Woman…"

J: I had that shit!

D: …it had the 'Fifth of Beethoven' disco-style. Actually, before I bought that, I was buying haunted house, scary Halloween-type sounds records in the first grade. I had a pretty good collection going. Lots of weird things, *Sounds to Make You Shiver*, Disney's *The Haunted Mansion* LP and records like that.

L: I've got three different ones, and I'm confused which one I bought first, 'cause I started buying records all at once. Waylon Jennings *Music Man*, Van Halen *1984*...

D: That dates you!

L: …Yeah, or it might have been Weird Al Yankovic's *Eat It* 7". I blew out the speakers to my parent's stereo trying to impress the kids playing kickball in my yard. They (my parents) came home asking, "Why does the stereo sound weird?"—"I dunno!"

J: The problem with me is that every album you guys just described, I would have received as gifts. I didn't have an allowance to actually buy albums until I was about 12. As far as spending my hard-earned cash on a record, I'd have to say it was either Quiet Riot's *Bang Your Head* 7", or Iron Maiden *Killers*. I don't remember which though.

MRR: Do you guys have any tours coming up?

L: We're planning on touring Japan in the end of May with High Vox and The Gimmies. We'll make sure our full-length is out before then so we don't look like complete dicks—touring over there without a proper release. As far as the US, we'll be doing a lot of West Coast shows, and we'll hopefully be on the East Coast soon as well. We'd love to play with Stockyard Stoics or Leftover Crack over there.

MRR: What is your most crucial part of the day?

D: Crucial? *[Laughter]*

MRR: Something that *has* to happen *every* day of your life.

D: Every day or the average day? I guess...getting off work.

J: Can I add to that? The first *beer* after work.

All: Yeah.

MRR: Within hardcore punk there's always been elitism, what do you think is a way, as members of this community, you can help remove or detour that?

L: Wow....

J: Couldn't you just ask us what the worlds fastest land mammal is?

L: I guess just to be nice to all the people around you, say hello to them, strike up conversations with people you don't know, especially those that don't look like they're the "hippest" one in the room. Find the weirdest person in the place, start a random conversation even if they might be an asshole...if they are...move on. That's one way—by breaking down all social barriers.

MRR: Do you guys like to play with any particular band, like a certain associated group you guys like to play or book shows with?

L: I like to mix it up, but it's usually best to play with bands that fit with us better musically.

D: It's always got to be the right vibe.

L: I like playing with metal bands like Scum Angel.

D: Agreed. We've been put on some pretty weird shows, but they've all turned out great.

J: We play with, and get along well with Pyrate Punk bands. It's cool because the crowd those shows bring along... It's like playing in front of a hundred of your good friends.

D: My mother asked me why she hasn't seen Jesus Fucking Christ yet, because whenever Neurosis plays she comes to the show...I told her it's because we play crappy warehouses and crappy bars. *[Laughter]*

MRR: When you guys discovered this music as a new sound, did it make you immediately want to play it?

D: Punk rock? Yes.

L: Yes!

J: One thing specifically about this band that I got excited about, when Larry was just introducing me to some material he had written on guitar. It reminded me of stuff I use to listen to in 8th and 9th grade—fourteen years old listening to Poison Idea, Resist—basically a lot of Pacific Northwest bands. The first few songs Larry played for me just brought me back there to those days, and I instantly knew I had to be in a band with him.

MRR: Jamie, what would you like on your tombstone?

J: Who the fuck asked that?

G: I can't tell you. Somebody just asked.

J: I suppose then, pepperoni. *[Laughter]*

MRR: Of all the tours the three of you have done in the past, what is the worst day, each of you can recall?

D: I once spent ten or twelve hours in Germany or Austria, I don't remember which, trying to get the power not to blow in the club. This was up until two hours *after* the doors had been opened. I remember having to go outside and tell all these people waiting in line that the show wasn't going to happen. The club just kept blowing the power, and we couldn't figure out why.

L: Mine isn't that horrible—But one time I played with the Rickets at X-Ray Cafe in Portland off Burnside, we drove all the way from Seattle using my parent's van, almost got pulled over by the cops for going down a one-way street the wrong way, couldn't find parking, and once situated in the club, found that the opening band was a popular local band called the Jimmies. I tried to talk them into playing after us so people wouldn't leave after they played. Well, we were from out of State, the Jimmies played before us and the crowd went crazy—circle pit, stage diving, everything. When they finished, the place cleared out and only three people were left to watch us. That was our first out of state show.

J: I don't know if it's necessarily the worst day of tour ever, but on a fairly recent Pitch Black tour, we showed up to play a skate shop in New Hampshire. It seemed cool until we walked in the club—it had all sorts of pro-Bush, pro-Christian, and anti-abortion propaganda all over the walls. We told them that we wouldn't play unless they took *everything* down. They refused, saying that we were the first band to ever complain about the club and how every other touring band loves it (the club). We drove off in a big "fuck you" leaving them bandless for the evening. They called our manager and record label screaming and complaining about us. We thought it was funny, but our dignity and values will always be left intact.

MRR: If Nike asked for the rights for half a song to be used in an advertisement, would you be willing to give that up?

L: Depends, how much are they willing to pay? Just kidding. *[Laughter]*

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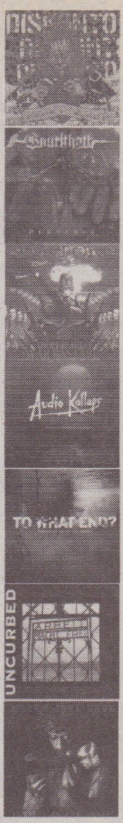

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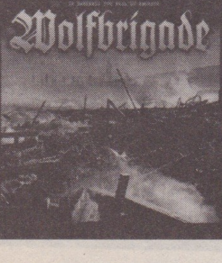

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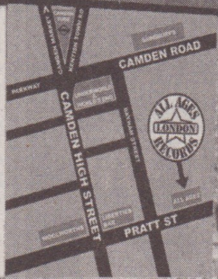
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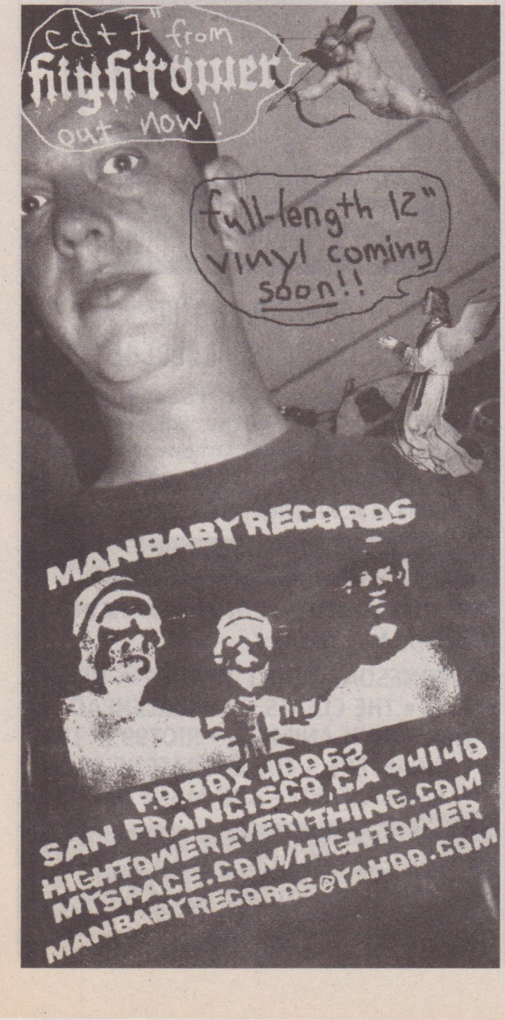
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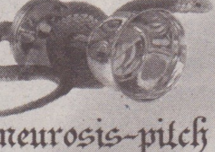

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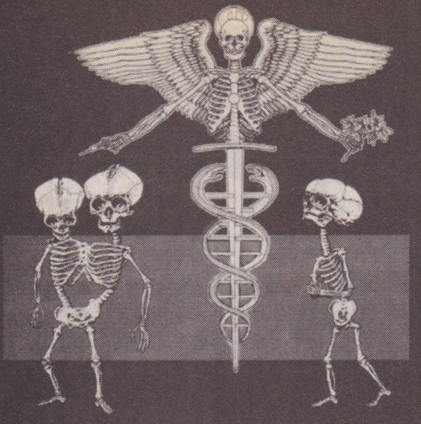

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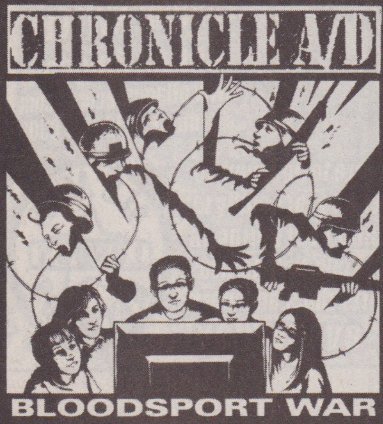
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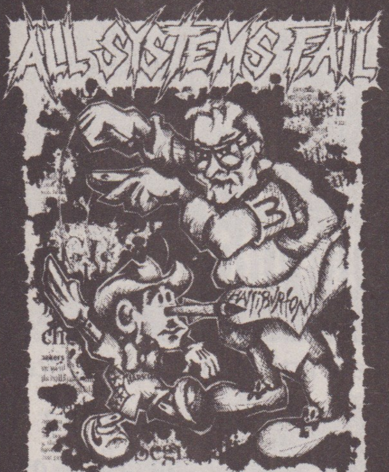
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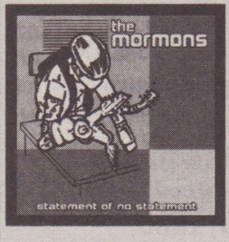
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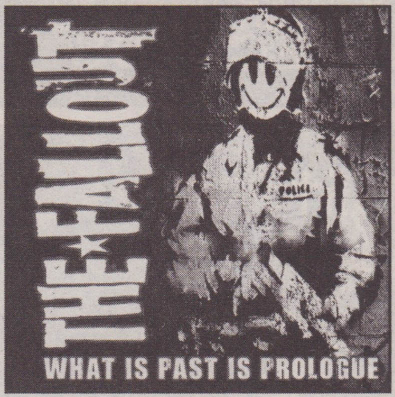
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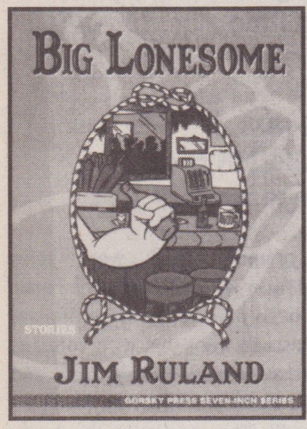


Big Lonesome
Jim Ruland
189 pages • $11.95
Gorsky Press • PO Box 42024
Los Angeles, CA 90042

I really enjoyed this book. *Big Lonesome* is a wonderfully strange and creative collection of short stories, and with it Jim Ruland establishes himself as an extremely versatile author. With too many short story writers these days, all their stories are kind of the same. If you don't like the first one you read, chances are you won't like the rest. Not so with *Big Lonesome* — even if you don't like several of the stories, they are all so completely different from each other that there are still a bunch left for you to like. And good writers, I believe, are those who aren't afraid to try different things, and don't feel they have to stick to one style all the time.

Ruland's stories are so wide-ranging and imaginative, sometimes disturbing, often darkly funny. The motley crew of characters is often bizarre and always interesting. This is also the perfect book for an armchair traveler, as story settings range from Ireland during WWII, to modern day Los Angeles, to Nevada in Wild West days, to 1880s Chicago to a spaceship. I never knew what to expect next.

My favorite stories were the modern day ones, "Brains for Bengo" and "Kessler Has No Lucky Pants." They involved seemingly normal characters and settings, which I could relate to, but each had an unusual twist. In "Brains," the young boy narrator removes his sister's brains and inserts them into Bengo Action Tiger, a stuffed toy, making it come alive. "I can't lie," he says, "I got the idea watching the Abbott and Costello meet Frankenstein DVD." This story, a bizarre black comedy, for me called attention to the utter strangeness of accepted norms of family life, and the detachment from reality caused by sensory and technological overload these days. But it was also just really weird and entertaining.

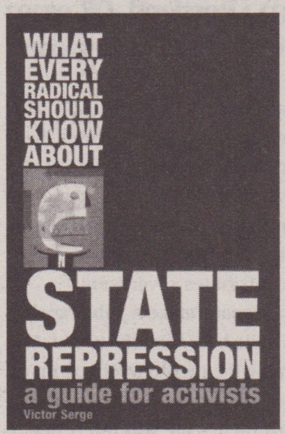
"Kessler Has No Lucky Pants" was a unique story, as it was written in a question-and-answer format. "How many pairs of lucky pants does Kessler own? None," it begins. "How many pairs of unlucky pants does Kessler own? Nine. Why were Kessler and Diane making love on the floor? Because the bedroom was occupied by Diane's husband, Jared, who had gotten riotously drunk and had passed out cold." I love how this Q&A format allows the reader to view the events taking place in a totally detached, rationally described way.

This is not a book for happy endings. It is more a book for very confusing endings that you might have to puzzle over for a while. It's also a disturbing book at times. The most disturbing, and also the most powerful story for me was "A Terrible Thing in a Place Like This." Set in the time of the Haymarket riots in Chicago, much of the story takes place in a slaughterhouse. I was very nearly made physically sick by some of Ruland's descriptions, but that just goes to show how powerful they are. The narrator, who is a new employee at the slaughterhouse and can slaughter animals more efficiently than anyone else, is also involved with the underground group of anarchists. He slowly starts to go crazy as a result of his work, and animalistic thoughts take over his mind. Like many of the stories in *Big Lonesome*, this one is written in present tense, something that really works for Ruland. It adds a quality of directness to the writing, and you feel even closer to the narrators and their strangeness.

There were a few things I didn't like about this book. It begins with "Night Soil Man," a not-so-strong story in which the main point seems to be some guys walking around a zoo and killing all the animals. It seemed like Ruland was trying to convey a deeper meaning with this story, but I really wasn't sure what it was. It definitely did not seem like the ideal way to open the collection. After reading it and the second story, a goofy four-pager called "The Previous Adventures of Popeye," I was thinking I was stuck reviewing a book I wasn't going to like. If I hadn't been doing a book review, I probably wouldn't have read on. I wouldn't have realized that the rest of the stories are super good. I also didn't like the ending of the final story, "Big Lonesome." While not exactly "heartwarming," it was definitely too much so for a book like this. After reading all the other stories, I really didn't expect the last story, and therefore the collection, to have such a traditional ending.

This isn't a book that tries too hard, and that is refreshing. It seems like Ruland had a lot of fun with it, and he truly wants his readers to enjoy the experience of reading. His writing style feels effortless, and carries an attitude like, this is what you get. If you don't like it, too bad! And this is what makes the book work. If you are looking for a book that celebrates the short story in its classic and most entertaining form, that also isn't afraid to take risks and be different, check out *Big Lonesome*.

—Jane Ghotlos



What Every Radical Should Know About State Repression
Victor Serge
141 pages • $14.95
Ocean Press
PO Box 1186 • Old Chelsea Stn
New York, NY 10113
www.oceanbooks.com.au

Victor Serge gives a fascinating account of the methods employed by Czarist police in pre-revolutionary Russia that is pretty relevant in the current political climate in America. The first section covers the Russian secret police and describes the repressive tools of the state, including surveillance, agents provocateurs, interception of mail and decoding, and so on. This section is dense with references to specific cases of agents and their methods, records of which were obtained from Czarist secret police archives following the Russian Revolution. This is interesting stuff that reinforces the idea that basically the same abuses of power occur repeatedly throughout history in order to maintain totalitarian regimes. Serge also maintains that the repression employed by the state, however effective, was a losing battle that could only temporarily delay the inevitable revolution. The second section deals with the problem of illegality. Serge asserts that a revolutionary movement that is entirely legitimate and without clandestine aspects is not equipped to organize against the well-organized and well-armed state. The primary claim here is that illegal activity is necessary to avoid repression. The next section, entitled simple advice to revolutionaries, is just that. Basically, he outlines security culture and measures to avoid surveillance and minimize risk of jeopardizing one's self and one's comrades. The final section of this book, the problem of revolutionary repression, is where things get hairy. I think that his discussion of the "legitimate" use of power to further the revolution betray a real authoritarian streak. Serge argues that repression by the revolutionary party is necessary and that the tools used by the state, such as police, prisons, and courts, are justified when used to further the revolution. He argues that terror and repression have always been used, and implies that is inevitable that they will continue to be used in the name of revolution.

The crux of Serge's argument is that the tools of repression are untenable in the hands of the state, yet are merited when used by the proletariat in class warfare. He presents the fairly standard Communist line that repression will become less necessary when the economic goals of Communism reach fruition alleviating poverty and hence, crime. Serge insists on the necessity of repression by the revolutionary party, regardless of inevitable mistakes and abuses. This position reveals Serge to be uncritical of the Bolshevik state and it's abuses of power. It's also steeped in elitist vanguardism. According to Serge, an elite and morally superior minority is required to lead the masses and minimize "inevitable" errors and injustices. The pretence that violence and statism was acceptable and necessary following the Russian Revolution is an unpalatable one. His arguments justifying violence in the name of the proletariat leave me with the impression of Serge as an apologist for state terror, as long as it's the Communist state.

—Tress

Making Stuff & Doing Things A Collection of DIY Guides to Doing Just About Everything

Kyle Bravo
288 pages • $10.00
Microcosm Publishing
PO Box 14332 • Portland, OR 97293
www.microcosmpublishing.com

Now here's an exciting compilation that makes a whole lot of sense! This thick, half-sized paperback is an assemblage of articles from Kyle's *How2Zine* and a number of submissions salvaged from the Tree of Knowledge DIY book that never came to completion. Divided into eighteen sections, what you get here is close to 115 "how to" articles, of which Mr. Bravo himself contributes seventeen.

You want to learn how to do your own shoe repair, make a rubbing alcohol stove, or make your own beer, wine, and root beer? So did two unsuspecting visitors in my house recently. One, my midwife, picked the book up off my desk not only because of the book's title, but also because of the colorful, artfully drawn cover. Thumbing through, she saw plenty she was interested in learning how to do herself and wanted to know how to get her own copy. Two, my mother-in-law's husband, who we affectionately refer to as "The Energy Saver," is also planning on getting himself a copy. Already a sensibly frugal, outdoors mountaineer kind of guy, he was immediately drawn into the book because of the amount and variety of articles. I mention these two who want to get their hands on their own copies of this book as to demonstrate this book's wide appeal, reaching far beyond the punk DIY subculture.

In a mainstream, corporate culture that has yet again co-opted and turned inside out a subcultural phenomenon, in this case the term "DIY" (think Home Depot and Martha Stewart groupie DIY posers), reaching beyond the punk DIY subculture while staying true to the spirit and motivation from which DIY hails is a fantastic feat. Beyond simply practical and useful information, this is an entertaining, fun, and inspirational collection of folk knowledge that resonates with passionate DIY spunk.

It's from real people, not corporate "DIY article" copywriters at Martha Stewart's magazine who play it safe and smooth out the edges. In this book, you won't find shopping lists telling you exactly what to buy and where to buy it alongside instructions telling you exactly how the finished product should look and feel when you're done. Instead, this book inspires ingenuity and creativity.

—Jessica Mills

A King-Cat Collection
Diary of a Mosquito Abatement Man
John Porcellino

Diary Of A Mosquito Abatement Man: A King Cat Collection

John Porcellino
$12.00
La Mano
PO Box 580828
Minneapolis, MN 55458
www.lamano21.com

This book compiles early work John Porcellino did for a self-published zine comic *King Cat* he's been putting out since the late 80s. Fans of his will want this, as it contains work of his that is now hard to find, and because the book also contains new work (The mixture shows how much his drawing and layout abilities have developed!). The stories in the book, reprints and new material alike, are connected by all being about the author's experiences as a Mosquito Abatement Man.

If you are not a *King Cat* fan, this book might still be of interest to you. Porcellino's early artwork is visually worthless, child-like, and devoid of skill. The stories, though, deal with the details of a generally overlooked type of work that people do all over this country and around the world. Viewed that way, this book is a nice example of the sort of proletarian historical document that Karl Marx, Henry Ford, and Gang Of Four would all approve of. Do you like to know what people are doing? Well, John Porcellino has some stories for you.

The stories herein detail fairly innocuous events: Porcellino gets stung by yellow jackets. He sees a crippled squirrel. He drives through a giant chemical factory late at night. He drives twelve miles per hour—a lot of nights. Yeah, he's a prole for sure. I was reminded of *Clerks*, but without any action. More interesting, but not directly dealt with, he works with lots of poisons and often distributes them into our water and, as a fog sprayed from a truck traveling twelve miles per hour, into the air of our communities at night.

You should find out if your city/town/county/state is engaging in "Mosquito Abatement" in your area, and how. All this indiscriminate dispersal of poisons is alarming! Here's indie publishing at it's best: giving one man his podium to tell us about his experience with something we all should care about!

As I said, Porcellino doesn't directly address the issues of the poisons. He does mention in the recently written introduction that he blames this exposure for health problems he has since suffered and expresses guilt over his involvement in this work. As this book is planned as the first in a series, the next volume will probably deal with the health problem aspect of his "Mosquito Abatement" career.

I wish this second volume I'm imagining had been part of this one. The book is unified by the theme, but without stories of his subsequent struggles there is no narrative weight. He's not faced with overcoming an obstacle to reach a goal or any other sort of grand narrative challenge. I guess that's why the title is *Diary Of A....* It's not nearly as entertaining as a six issue series about a hot-bodied female former Soviet spy dashing around the world killing corrupt industrialists who want her dead. It doesn't have the glamour of a series about a millionaire ubermensch who dresses himself and a boy in spandex so they can wrestle robbers in the night. It doesn't have color ink or computer-generated "special effects," painted art, or cleavage-revealing costumes on the characters. But it is one man's testimony in this world.

—Seth Hollander

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MICHAEL PARENTI

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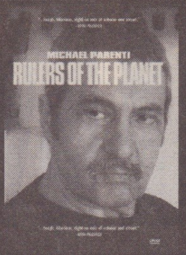
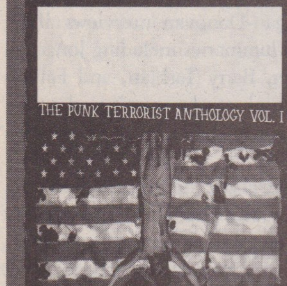


Award-winning historian and author Michael Parenti delivers his on-target observations based on historical facts, of America's tendencies towards creating a world empire, in spite of our democracy at home and democratic movements abroad. Also includes an intimate look at how he became one of the most well known academic troublemakers of the Vietnam era!



The first volume of Nausea's anthology featuring their early years is now available on Alternative Tentacles as a companion to ***The Punk Terrorist Anthology, Vol II*** (Virus 338). Released in cooperation with Blacknoise Records.

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JELLO BIAFRA WITH THE MELVINS

SIEG HOWDY!

For those of you still reeling in the wake of ***Never Breathe What You Can't See,*** here's some more! Further off the deep end and more Melvinoid this time, Jello and the Melvins serve up six more studio tracks (including a cover of Alice Cooper's "Halo of Flies"), remixes by Al Jourgensen, Dälek, and the Deaf Nephews, and to top it off: an all-new live version of the DKlassic "Kali-förnia Über Alles" – this time about the gübernator, Schwarzenegger himself - and not a moment too soon!'
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MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

You know you are a rock star when your audience explodes with applause because you spit on the stage. That happened at the Patti Smith show I went to in November. It was the 30th anniversary of *Horses* and everyone was probably just really excited, but she spit on stage and everyone went crazy. It kind of freaked me out.

There aren't many musicians who will get that reaction. This month I saw a couple of documentaries that look at some of the unsung heroes of rock and roll. Most people don't know who the hell John Felice or Arthur Kane are, but each now has the story of the life for the masses to examine, if they actually will.

I grew up just outside of Boston in Quincy, Massachusetts so I always thought the Real Kids were extremely popular. I would hear "All Kindsa Girls" on commercial radio along with the Modern Lovers, Mission Of Burma, La Peste, and The Lyres. They'd have to be famous, right? It wasn't until I moved to San Francisco that I discovered what an anomaly Boston radio in the 70s and 80s was. But the world is starting to appreciate the greatness of Boston rock and I am sure **All Kindsa Girls: The Real Kids Story** will help that.

All Kindsa Girls: The Real Kids Story is a fairly modest film. It is only an hour long and wastes the last ten minutes interviewing bands that were influenced by the Real Kids. What it does show is worth it. There is some amazing footage of the band playing back in the day. There is a clip of the band playing "My Baby's Book" in what looks like someone's parents' basement rec room. It is shot with two cameras and nicely edited showing the band at their height. The band looks good and like they are having fun. I am sure the drugs haven't entered the picture yet.

All Kindsa Girls: The Real Kids Story mostly focuses on John Felice, the band's singer, guitar player, and songwriter. Felice grew up in Natick, Massachusetts next door to Jonathan Richman. When Richman thought of forming the Modern Lovers, he asked Felice to join. After playing too many "professional" gigs with the Modern Lovers, Felice decided to quit and form his own band. That band was The Kids, which later morphed into the Real Kids when presumably they discovered the Belgian band. The band developed a big local following, but it was a French label Sponge Records that put out the first single, "All Kindsa Girls/ Common At Noon."

The band followed that up with the infamous debut album on Red Star. However, when that album didn't make them rock stars, the band started their downfall. Guitar player Billy Borgioli was traded to another band Baby's Arm for their guitar player Billy Cole. The remaining members of Baby's Arm and Borgioli formed Classic Ruins. To all interviewed in the film this seems to be when all the trouble began.

All Kindsa Girls: The Real Kids Story has some great footage of the band playing at Boston's Rat (RIP). I wore my Rat T-shirt to the screening as a tribute to the great club and because I knew there would be a lot of Bostonians there; I wanted to show off. The film's director Cheryl Eagan-Donovan's son was sitting in front of me and noticed my shirt. It was very cute since I know he was too young to have ever gone to the Rat. When I asked him, he was too shy to tell me.

Some of the other footage includes a show a France's Le Bataclan as well as some more recent reunion shows. Overall, the film plays down the band's problems choosing instead to focus on the music. Eagan-Donovan interviews all the original band members as well as many Boston luminaries including Jonathan Richman, Willie "Loco" Alexander, JJ Rassler, Barry Tashian, and Felice's mother and sister. Of course, it is hard not to think of who wasn't in the film. I kept thinking, "Where's Billy Ruane," and then in the last shot John Felice offhandedly mentions him.

Although, I would have preferred to hear more about the band and less from newer bands covering the Real Kids, the interview with Firestarter's Fink is pretty hilarious. He talks about how he is influenced by all bands whose names start with the letter R. In a mocking tribute to the American stereotype that the Japanese can't pronounce the letter, he proceeds to say the name of all these bands. Of course, the most influential is The Real Kids. (www.d-filed.com/controversyfilms.html)

New York Doll tells the story of New York Dolls bassist Arthur "Killer" Kane. It is extremely cool to see a documentary that doesn't focus on one of the more obvious band members. Kane died in 2004 after the band reformed at the request of Morrissey for the Meltdown Festival, a music festival he was putting together.

New York Doll is one of the best music documentaries I have seen. It is really well made and has a compelling and very sad story. There is the prerequisite band introduction. It is quick and doesn't have that usual condescending or overblown feel most of them do. It just establishes the band's place in musical history and then moves on to the story.

After the break up of the New York Dolls Arthur Kane moved to Los Angeles. He was an alcoholic and did small parts in movies while still trying to make it music. He became distraught by the success his fellow Dolls were having, particularly David Johansen, and tried to kill himself by jumping out of a third story window. When he was recovering, he saw an ad on TV to get a free book from the Church of Latter Day Saints. He didn't have much else to do and perhaps he might read it so he called for one. Two Mormons personally delivered the book. They talked and he decided to join the church.

New York Doll manages to show how right this religious conversion was for Kane without becoming too preachy. This may be because a fellow Mormon made the film. We see Kane at his library job and hear from his co-workers and priests about their impressions of Kane and his live as a New York Doll. Everyone truly likes him and enjoys hearing his stories about his past. The church even helps Kane get his guitars out of the pawnshop when he needs them for the reunion. There are also interviews with Morrissey, Jonathan Richman, Sylvain Sylvain, David Johansen, Bob Geldof, Chrissy Hynde, as well as fans that go to the reunion show.

New York Doll director Greg Whiteley did one of the best post-film Q&A's I have ever attended. It was fortunate that everyone there was really into the subject. Whiteley answered every question including the one I asked, "Was David Johansen as a big a jerk as he seems in the film?" "Did you really think he was a jerk?" Whiteley asked the crowd, to which everyone screamed, "Yes!" In the film, the band is back stage at the reunion show. Kane asks Johansen about the New York Dolls T-shirts everyone is wearing. Johansen tells him they are selling them out front, but they aren't going to give Kane any of the money because he will just give it to his church. The forlorn looking Kane doesn't say anything to that while Johansen smiles a big grin. Then Kane comes back with; "I only have to give them ten per cent. It's like an agent's fee."

Whitely defends Johansen saying he wasn't a jerk. Whiteley tells us that when he screened the film for Johansen, he asked if the scene in question could be removed. Johansen felt it made him look like an asshole. The director didn't want to. He felt it was a pivotal scene. Whiteley's argument is that most people, including the film's audiences don't understand why Kane became a Mormon. Most people are too polite to say anything about it so Johansen is playing the necessary role of being the one to make fun of his religion to his face. So they compromised and removed a bit where he says what the only commandment he hasn't broken is. That way people would think Johansen may have murdered someone. (www.onepotatoproductions.com/NewYorkDoll/index.html)

A lot of people complained that **New York Doll** didn't have enough live footage of the band. I honestly didn't notice since the film was so engrossing. Luckily there is also a live documentary film about the New York Dolls called **All Dolled Up**. It is available on DVD for those of you who will be complaining because you won't be able to see the previously mentioned films.

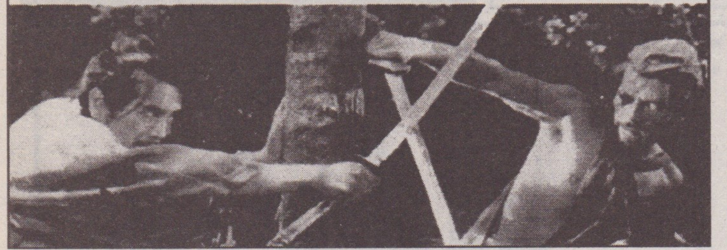
Bob Gruen and his ex-wife Nadya Beck filmed over 40 hours of footage of the New York Dolls. At least, that's what the DVD case says, but listening to Gruen's commentary, he admits that Beck is the one who shot most of the video. Since Gruen is a photographer, he was busy taking still pictures.

If you ever want to see what the Dolls were like on stage and off, **All Dolled Up** is the film for you. Gruen and Beck film the New York Dolls all over New York and follow them when they go to Los Angeles and San Francisco. Watching the band go to the airport and board an airplane is just one of the many amazing scenes you get to witness. I like to notice all the small details like while in the limo on the way to the airport Arthur Kane and Sylvain Sylvain drink Pabst while the others drink Colt 45. Hmmm, interesting.

It was also cool seeing the footage at Rodney's English Disco. I always thought the place was smaller. There is a piece on the Dolls from a New York newscast done by Joel Siegel who I know as the guy who always says "the feel good film of the year" in movie ads. Someone backstage in Los Angeles asks Johansen if they are going to San Francisco next. When, he says yes, she tells him that she doesn't like San Francisco. "People are too serious there." That got a big laugh. (www.newyorkdollsdvd.com)

FINAL CUT

BY STEVEN SPINALI



ROCK'N'ROLL BABYLON

New York Doll is less a rock'n'roll history than a bittersweet swan song to the band's unlikeliest hero. As a member of the Dolls, Arthur "Killer" Kane was remembered primarily for his well-placed bass lines, but as other members went on greater fortune (or early death, as fate had it), Kane found himself with a series of obscure bands leaving behind the detritus of failure. What's to be done if you're a dedicated rocker with nowhere to play?

Kane was fully aware of the Dolls' deep influence on other bands, and perceived rock'n'roll in almost archetypal terms. In fact, he even saw something mythical in his relationship to the band's origins; a latter-day King Arthur, he saw his guitar as a kind of Excalibur, a weapon in the arsenal to save rock'n'roll from encroaching mediocrities like Jethro Tull and ELO.

Kane was increasingly bitter over the unfairness of it all. What brought it all to a head was seeing front-man David Johansen playing a bit part as a cabby in a Bill Murray movie. Arthur Kane jumped out of a third-floor window, hitting bottom on a number of levels at once.

He gave up on Excalibur, but seems to have found his Holy Grail instead. In the late 80s, he responded to a TV ad for the Church of Jesus of Latter Day Saints. Formerly a stranger to the bible (much less the Book of Mormon), he soon found himself infused with a knowledge that he'd found what he'd been looking for. This lanky, circumspect man—a former member of one of the most notorious bands ever—was now a Mormon.

In that seems like the father of incongruities, Arthur "Killer" Kane found himself working at the Mormon Family History Center; moreover, he was actually quite happy doing it. Two aging women at the center counted themselves as Kane's official groupies, even though they hadn't heard a note of the Dolls' music.

New York Doll is notable as much for its strong filmmaking as for its uncanny ability to be in the right place at the right time. When former Smiths' vocalist Morrissey calls Kane about a New York Dolls reunion, none of them could know that the taciturn bassist would succumb to leukemia within the year. The omnipresent camera runs as Kane makes a curious transformation from a cloistered Mormon librarian to wizened rocker, though he frequently seems out of place in his revived role. Then again, he gives the general impression of being out of place in the world—unlike his more flamboyant group members. On stage, fellow survivors David Johansen and Syl Sylvain dub him "the last great rock'n'roll statue."

Living in a cheap one-room apartment, Kane gets one of his guitars out of the pawnshop. (He'd been paying monthly fees to the shop for years, when for a little bit more money, he could have simply claimed the instrument; the idea to redeem them never seem to have crossed his mind.) And now he has to prepare himself for that reunion, and a chance to meet Johansen and Syl Sylvain again after more than 20 years. With death having claimed much of the band, Kane saw it as a means to mend old bridges…and maybe recapture some past glory.

As you might have already guessed, **New York Doll** is hardly your preferred source for a definitive band history; some may even feel annoyed on its concentration on Kane's post-conversion life. But life clearly had more than its share of pathos, and offers an oblique light on a rocker who followed a different path. Commentary by Chrissie Hynde, Tony Jones of Generation X, Bob Geldof, and other rock luminaries give historical weight to the documentary. Kane's life comes off as a vain grasp for a modest bit of fame.

New York Doll is more a traditional documentary in form, but **All Dolled Up** is closer to a concert film.

When it comes to proto-punk, I've always been more a Stooges than Dolls fan. But I think it can be argued that the Dolls had an even stronger influence on later punk rock. Before the Ramones were a band, they were electrified by NY's premier rockers, and for a short time even flitted with glam fashion before adopting their classic torn Levi's and leather jacket look.

While da Boys would soon eclipse both bands in output and influence, the New York Dolls were a unique and aggressive presence during their short existence. Thankfully, photographer Bob Gruen and Nadya, his wife, were smart enough to film live footage of the band, capturing the band during their peak. Sound quality varies, but somehow it doesn't really matter with a band like the Dolls.

Gruen followed the band on tour, documenting performances at famous clubs like Max's Kansas City and the Whisky-A-Go-Go (as well as well as a few other smaller, less famous venues). Forty hours of live footage was whittled down to the almost two hours in this film.

The Dolls' raucous, defiant style clearly set the basic sound for bands like the MC5 and Sex Pistols—a fact that becomes more obvious the longer you listen. Their glam trappings would remain a part of rock'n'roll, at least on the fringe, and elements of their garage-y sound can still be heard.

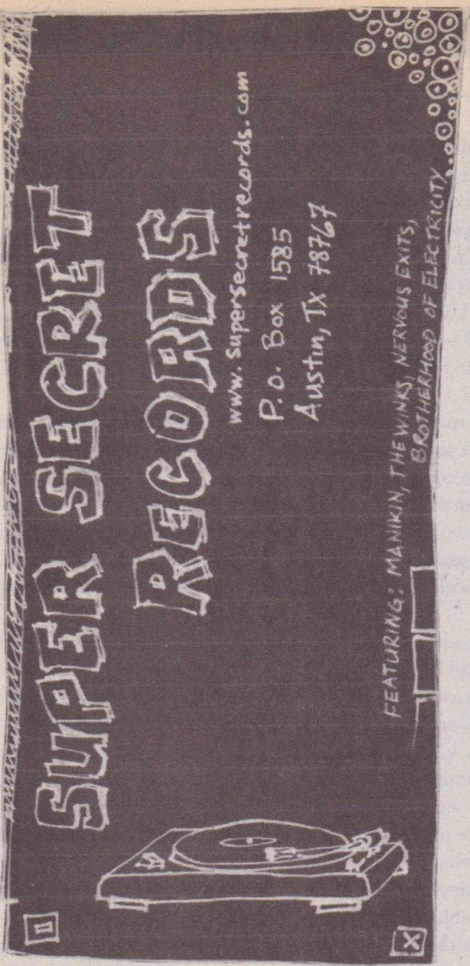
After seeing **All Dolled Up**, you may end up feeling that your old Dolls LPs don't quite represent the band in their full glory. Personally, I never had a chance to see them live; but when you hear a tune like "Personality Crisis" played by a bunch of men in drag and makeup, their statement suddenly has a whole lot more punch.

(SF fans were luckier in that they had the Outrageous Beauty Pageant, a Friday night act that preceded the nightly bill of punk bands. Musically, it wasn't very good, but their Dolls-ish image and desire to shock gave you insight into the New York Dolls' aesthetic of rock'n'roll rebellion—even to the point of playing their songs. Similarly, the New York Dolls were the image of rock's most isolated outcasts.)

All Dolled Up is an ear-opening survey of the band's best songs in very good performances, including simmering renditions of classics like "Pills," "Trash," and of course "Personality Crisis." As a band history, it intersperses interviews with raw live material to give you perhaps their most complete and flattering portrait yet.

Both **New York Doll** and **All Dolled Up** are now available on DVD with expanded features.

Comments? Email me at anywhichway@myway.com.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RECORDS

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Reviewers: Tim Brooks (TB), Mitch Cardwell (MC), Rob Coons (RC), Carl Cordova (CC), Paul Curran (PC), Andy Darling (AD), Dr. Dante (DD), Sean Dougan (SD), Nic Eagle (NE), Jonathan Floyd (JF), Jeff Heermann (JH), Vince Horner (VH), Layla Gibbon (LG), Chris Hubbard (CS), Kenny Kaos (KK), Carolyn Keddy (CK), Ramsey Kanaan (RK), Will Kinser (WK), Elliott Lange (EL), Ray Lujan (RL), Hal MacLean (HM), Allan McNaughton (AM), Golnar Nikpour (GN), Bruce Roehrs (BR), Ken Sanderson (KS), Martin Sorrondeguy (MS), Steve Spinali (SS), Brian Stern (BS), Ryan Wells (RW), Shane White (SW).

999 – "Live at the Nashville 1979" LP

This recording captures 999 at probably close to their peak. Many of the hits are surprisingly absent (no "I'm Alive" or "Homicide"), but the track listing is satisfying enough. Unfortunately, the sound quality is terrible. The live recording doesn't sound too bad, but the LP has a constant and distracting hiss riding over the top. I've no idea if this is on the original recording or if it's just one of Get Back's added touches, but either way, I can't recommend this. I'd love to hear a hiss-free version of this record though. (AM)

(Get Back, Via Aretina 25, 50069 Sieci [Firenze], ITALY)

AFTER THE BOMBS – "Terminal Filth Stench Bastard" EP

Hard-charging crust from Montreal with every song about such cheery topics as "Brutality," "Hell," "Genocide," and "Fear." Heavier than most, AFTER THE BOMB's best trait is their use of brutal, metallic, mid-tempo sections—not really breakdowns, just breaks of serious head-banging, chugging guitars. Screeched female vocals with so much reverb it sounds like she was recorded in a tunnel give it an almost black metal feel, but this is crust punk all the way. Maybe the songs could be a bit shorter but other than that, this is good stuff. (EL)

(Sjakk Matt Plater, Tarjei Moksnes, PO Box 7008, 0306, Oslo, NORWAY)

AGAINST EMPIRE – "The Ones Who Bear the Scars Remember" LP

I really like the message AGAINST EMPIRE conveys with their lyrics. Yes, their songs are against the pollution of man, anti-capitalist, anti-war—although a bit repetitive at times, they are overall really genuine and heartfelt. I think that their style is good, but a little too eclectic for me. The songs seem to not have a common ground that translates to an overall sound, but instead tend to jump around from metallic crust riffs in songs to more straight-ahead punk, with some melodic interludes, and are just a bit transient. Certainly not bad but just a bit all over the map. I think that this is still pretty good and fans of SoCal political crust punk will enjoy it. One other comment about art: I really hate when people take famous pictures from the Internet for their layout. It looks horrible and out of focus, and I'm sure with a bit of searching these bands could find a reprint of the real thing which would make the record look ten times better. I've said this before, I know. (WK)

(www.threattoexistence.com)

AGHAST – "Desolate Legacy" EP

An over the top CONFUSE/GAI homage—everything from the sound, the logos, the feedback, the inappropriate and obtuse use of the English language, the DISCHARGE –style haiku, the feedback, the noisy DISORDER-style instrument bashing with in the red guitar, the wild slathering vocals, the cymbal smashing, and the feedback, and all from Washington, DC. Six blasting and harsh tracks, though such close alignment to the now ancient originators they choose to emulate casts them in their noisy shadow. Then again, I doubt GAI or SWANKY'S would've put down the Sapporo long enough to address gentrification and pesticides, and these days "children don't know the feedback noise," much less the war. Blasting savage tradition chaos noise party. (KS)

(Distort Reality, PO Box 80338, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

ANOTHER DAY – "No Tomorrow" CD

Hell-for-leather hardcore. It's very fast and angry, with a few slower moshy parts...not really my cup of tea, but I'm sure someone will dig it. (AD)

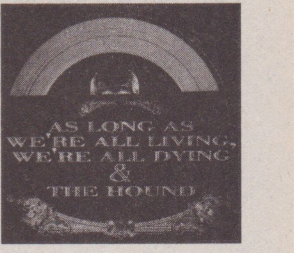
(Gutshot, www.gutshotrecords.net)

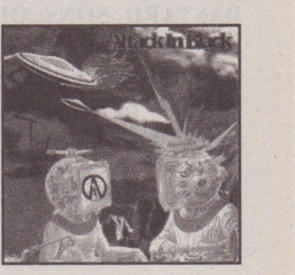
AS LONG AS WE'RE ALL LIVING, WE'RE ALL DYING / THE HOUND – split EP

If your band name is so long it needs punctuation, it's too long. Fortunately, though, ALALWAL,WAD (that's ridiculous) is a better-than-average Boston area metalcore duo. They have a nice big mean sound (especially for a two-piece) with plenty of crunch to the guitars and good riffs and arrangements. The HOUND, meanwhile, is pretty forgettable metalcore with great big deliberate couldn't-miss-it-if-you-were-deaf mosh parts that don't move me much, but obviously do the

AFTER THE BOMBS

AGHAST
DESOLATE LEGACY





bad news
cops are coming

kids photographed kickboxing on the insert. Actually, it looks more like they're doing jumping jacks. Anyway, some of these riffs are OK, some are average, and some are just plain bad, like the one that opens their side of the record—not a good sign. Worth checking out for the band whose name I can't bring myself to repeat. (EL)

(Teenage Disco Bloodbath, www.tdbrecords.com)

ATTACK IN BLACK – CD

Canadians ATTACK IN BLACK play modern emo-hardcore, but haven't completely cut their ties to 80s punk… This stuff really confuses and pisses me off. Sure, it's better than SAVES THE DAY, but if you like BLACK FLAG enough to cover "Depression" what the fuck are you doing taking four otherwise fast, solid, straight-forward songs and defiling them with disgustingly pretty vocal harmonies an d sugary guitars? (VH)

(Skate Ahead, 62 Book Rod, Grimbby, ON L3M 2M2, CANADA)

BAD NEWS – "Cops Are Coming" EP

Sometimes I wish I knew what is going on in people's heads when they form a band. BAD NEWS is one of those bands that combine a bunch of musical styles—surf, electronic, and new wave with bratty punk vocals. It just sounds wrong. Actually, I think I would like this better if the lyrics weren't so unenjoyably bad. The first song "Cops Are Coming" starts off with the opening riff of "Gary Gilmore's Eyes" then proceeds to a basic surf riff with the singer yelling, "Hey, everybody, get down on the fuckin' floor and stay down" over it. It doesn't get much better from there. It is too bad because I was really excited to see a new Sack O' Shit record. (CK)

(Sack O' Shit, PO Box 308, Kankakee, IL 60901, info@badnews.it)

BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE – "React" EP

The second BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE 7" sounds quite a bit like their first (released earlier this year), which is understandable since I believe they were both recorded at the same session (and all their songs sound pretty much the same anyway). This time around you get five more tracks of stripped down, raw Swedish hardcore that brings to mind *Bomb Raid*-era ANTI-CIMEX. Not a lot of innovation at work here, but these Texans have their routine down pat, and play with more drive and energy than your average DIS-clone group. You should catch 'em live if you get the chance. (CS)

(Distort Reality, PO Box 80338, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

BAYONET – "2nd Demo 21/9-1983" EP

This is a demo put to vinyl, and for good reason: BAYONET play some catchy Finnish raw punk that matches bands like ATROCIOUS MADNESS and the DOUBLE O demos in sheer distorted mess and noisy energy. It is demo quality for sure in sound, though. Something about this record is weird—it has no insert and no labels—is it a bootleg, or a fan club release as it is titled on eBay? If it is a fan club release, it seems that BAYONET fans could have dug up even a bit of info on this band. This record will only appeal to those of us who have a place in our hearts for the rawest of the raw punk and a desire to make the collection complete. I would say it sounds a bit like KAAOS, APPENDIX or some other more obscure Finnish hardcore records from the same decade. Sound is shit, but the music holds up, I just wish I knew what they where screaming about. (WK)

(bootleg, no address)

THE BEATINGS – "Holding on to Hand Grenades" CD

16 tracks from this New England combo: tunes like "This City is Killing Me," "Feel Good Ending," "Remedial Math Rock," "Oh Shit, My Phaser's Jammed," and other serious and not-so-serious offerings. The BEATINGS hearken back to the legions of borderline punk-ish PAVEMENT-inspired bar bands that plied their trade in my end of the forest in the early 90s: they don't rage, but rather trundle along at a slow boil. *Holding on to Hand Grenades* is not bad, nor is it sense-shattering. It simply *is.* (JH)

(Midriff, www.midriffrecords.com)

BELLIGERENTS – "Suck On This" EP

This fucking blows. Sub-par beer-punk homophobic bullshit from Portland. It's like a punk Halloween costume, a street punk on Jerry Springer…a fucking joke. Fake bogus yawn-inducing reactionary shite. (LG)

(Blind Spot, PMB 697, 3534 SE 52nd Ave., Portland, OR 97206)

BIRTHDAY SUITS – "Cherry Blue" CD

Minneapolis two-piece BIRTHDAY SUITS play sassy indie rock with a touch of fuzz and discordance that borders on punk. A while back, someone here at *MRR* said to me "CD's are the new demo." After years of wasted time and unremitting ear damage, I've come to the conclusion that CDs are not the new demo, but the new "used condom." *Cherry Blue* is definitely not the worst to date, but I don't think its coincidence that I've never heard of Nice & Neat records… *Flush it!* (VH)

(Nice & Neat, PO Box 14177, Minneapolis, MN 55414)

BLACK FLAG – "Pre-My War Demos 1982" LP

Yet another bootleg of the demos that were recorded before *My War* (hence the clever title). If you are turned off by a lot of post-*Damaged* era BLACK FLAG, then you might appreciate these songs over the album versions. Personally, I like a lot of these better (especially the songs that would later show up on *My War*). Songs on this LP like "I Love You," "My War," and "Swinging Man" are generally faster, rougher, and all around more punk. If nothing else, you should pick this up for Rollins screaming on "Nothing Left Inside." It still makes the hairs stand up on the back of my neck. The artwork leaves something to be desired, but the sound quality is good, which is the best you can expect from a bootleg. Pick this up if you don't already own the many other bootlegs from these same sessions. (CC)

(bootleg, no address)

BLACK JOE LEWIS & COOL BREEZE – "Boogie" EP

A very old-sounding single, which of course I mean in the best way possible. You could slip this one on at your local honky tonk (if any still exist) and it would mesh nicely with JAMES BROWN or OTIS REDDING. The songs have a nice sound with the minimal instrumentation and LEWIS' pleading, soulful vocals. I can only imagine what would have happened if BLACK JOE LEWIS recorded at Stax back in the day. Wow, that probably would have been amazing. (CK)

(Shake Your Ass, no address)

BLACK TIME – "New Vague Themes" LP

I've never quite caught the fever these guys are spreading around, chalk it up to my Kleen living. I *should* like them, I mean, I'm genetically predisposed to dig 'em; they are arty garage rock, they aren't a-feared of breaking the three minute barrier, they are from Merry Olde, the singer is sneering his way through the Secret Playbook of the Forefathers, etc., but they still leave me a little bit cold. There are some stirring moments on here, particularly "Caution's Camera," but overall the hype has not penetrated the 'ol epidermis. Perhaps if they visit me in the dead of night and play their catalog for me at shiv-point I'll come around, but for now I'm all, like, what-*ever!* (RW)

(P Trash, www.ptrashrecords.com)

BLOWTOPS – "Insected Mind" CD

I can sense that these guys would like to leave "garage rock" behind entirely, but they still have a basic affection for the Big Beat. In this regard, they are like the early no-wave bands, in that they keep it simple so as to get

their aggression across as directly as possible while still retaining the rock 'n' roll framework. This is the sort of post-garage group that would be a great transition record for someone attempting to escape a suburban upbringing consisting of NINE-INCH NAILS and their digital ilk. It's dark, creepy, and dramatic, and fuzzed up enough to still fall into our realm. With the LOST SOUNDS gone, the bloodied banner passes to their care. Hoist, into the vanguard! (RW)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

THE BOILS – "From the Bleachers" CD
I was expecting mid-paced street punk, but this is straight-up, fast, pissed-off and tough hardcore punk. A whopping 25 tracks speed by with barely a hair's breadth in between. Angry vocals and group-chanted back-ups are the order of the day, with a few breakdowns and slower paced anthems threw in for good measure. I wonder if this is on double vinyl, it's certainly quite a monster of an album. Color me impressed, it's another hit from... (AD)
(TKO, Atlanta Ave. #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)

BRAVO FUCKING BRAVO – "II" CD
BRAVO FUCKING BRAVO, from New Hampshire, hammers out some aggressive screamo fused with hardcore roots. The tunes are upbeat and the production is crisp and solid throughout. The forced screaming vocals fit the music well, but there are no lyrics enclosed with the CD, so I am not sure what he was yelling about. Nevertheless, I thought this was pretty damn good considering I dislike a majority of the bands in this genre these days. (RC)
(Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126, www.alonerecords.com)

BREAK IT UP – "No Sides" CD
BREAK IT UP plays straight-up, traditional, positive hardcore. The music is fast, the use of octaves is minimal, and the song writing is pretty good. My problems lies in the production, which I think lacks the right punch. It could have to do with the singer, who goes from decent to great the more pissed he gets. With a few minor tweaks, this band could be one of England's best traditional hardcore bands. (CC)
(Dean and Gone, www.deadandgone.co.uk)

THE BREAKS – "Get Saved" EP
Good modern thrash hardcore in the vein of CUT THE SHIT. This six-song 7" has all the elements: short songs, catchy riffs, good arrangements, lots of energy, and it plays on 45. Lyrics to songs like "Landlocked Blues" broach familiar teenage concerns. A nice debut, putting St. Louis HC on the map. (CS)
(Firestarter, 2981 Falls Rd, Baltimore, MD 21211, www.firestarterrecords.com)

CELIBATE RIFLES – "Beyond Respect" CD
There was a time in the late 80s/early 90s when it seemed as if Rock Itself had up and moved to Australia. Rock meaning your super-bedrock STOOGES worship, of course, leavened with 60s garage, or early-80s punk, or 70s songwriting, or what have you. There was just so much great, melodic, non-metal junque coming out from the Chunders: your HARD ONS, COSMIC PSYCHOS, FEEDTIME…and then these guys, who started in the early 80s and didn't really change much for a solid decade or more. So, like most, I've lost track of them over the last ten years, but here's a new one from Mr. Lovelock and Co. I suppose if you simply *have* to age, you could do a lot worse than this, a mixture of educated nods towards their roots mixed with a reserved dose of mature technical studio proficiency. They aren't singing for their lives anymore like a young band should, and you can definitely pick that up, but the record has a comfortably fuzzy-sweater RADIO BIRDMAN cruise going on and that's not too bad. Solid. (RW)
(Bang!, APDO 166, Santurtzi 48980, Bizkaia, Basque Country, SPAIN)

CENOBITES – "Snakepit Vibrations" CD
Dutch psychobilly, apparently, but I'm hearing waaaay more rock than roll. Sounds like a cock-rock band with a slight DEMENTED ARE GO edge. (TB)
(Drunkkabilly, Postbus 87, 9050 Ledeberg 1, BELGIUM)

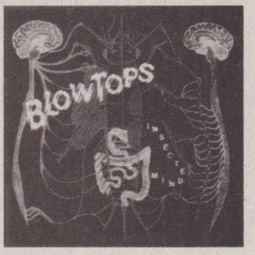
CHILI COLD BLOOD – "Why Baby Why / Slow Down"
Twangy rocker backed by a speedy blues shuffle; enough attitude is thrown in on both sides to keep this from being mistaken for bar blues, but I would've liked a little more. A little too technico and not enough rudo for my taste. (DD)
(Shake Your Ass, www.syarecords.it)

CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE – "Gateway Handshake" EP
This is old-style hardcore. Sometimes it's mid-tempo. Other times it's a little faster paced. It's got vocals that go from screaming to singing and sometimes even combine the two. It's like taking a whole bunch of BLACK FLAG, some FEAR, a little DEAD KENNEDYS, a pinch of the DESCENDENTS, and even a little COCK SPARRER. They've even got one number with the male/female vocal combination. *[Editor's note: This record came out quite a while ago, but we only got it recently.]* (KK)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604; www.noidearecords.com)

COCK SPARRER – "What You See…Is What You Get" 2xDVD
COCK SPARRER is one of my all-time favorite bands. Every song is a winner, they haven't done a bad record, and unlike a lot of the "punk" bands of old they have pretty much remained the same—just blokes from down the pub (albeit a bit fatter and balder). This DVD (eight hours over two discs!) is such a treat—a complete show from the UK in 2003 with all their hits (which also came out on CD) filmed on two cameras with good sound, as well as *tons* of bonus material including other live stuff, a couple of promo videos (including a late-70s version of "We Love You" with the band wearing make-up, looking like SLADE!!), interviews, and an hour-long history with interviews and live clips. It would have been

BAYONET
2ND DEMO 21/9-1983

BELLIGERENTS



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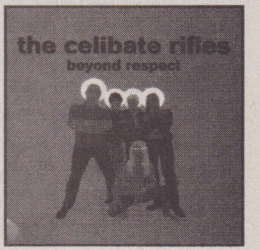


CHILI
COLD
BLOOD

nice have seen more footage from the 70s and 80s instead of the majority being 90s and 00s, but that aside this is still a great watch. The best thing about the DVD is that after watching all the interviews the band come across as a bunch of blokes you'd like to go to the pub with. Oh, and the music is great too. (TB)

(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave. #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)

CODE OF HONOR – "Complete Studio Recordings 1982-1984" CD

A fine and much needed discography release for this classic SF hardcore punk band. CODE OF HONOR evolved out of the decidedly less political SICK PLEASURE when vocalist Johnithin Christ replaced Nikki Sikki. The two bands shared a split LP released in '82 that has since become a minor classic of early California hardcore. CODE OF HONOR also put out a two-song 7" (one song of which was on MRR's *Not So Quiet on the Western Front* compilation). At this stage, the band was in fine form, and their material was an excellent mix of up-tempo thrash and anthemic punk, featuring a distinct sense of melody and Johnithin Christ's impassioned vocals (delivered with an unmistakable uber-California accent). In addition, CODE OF HONOR had a tendency towards the melodramatic, most apparent in the spoken word poem that appeared toward the end of the split LP. This side of the band came to the fore on their final release, 1984's *Beware the Savage Jaw* LP, which found the group "progressing" past the "limitations of hardcore" or some such nonsense. Though not entirely wince-inducing throughout, *Savage Jaw* shows a band whose reach clearly exceeds their grasp. As the title suggests, the *Complete Studio Recordings* neatly collects all of the band's output onto one CD, including an unreleased track from 1982. Subterranean did an excellent job putting everything together, and the booklet includes photos, lyrics to all the songs, and a retrospective by guitarist and producer Michael Fox. (CS)

(Subterranean, PO Box 2530, Berkeley, CA 94702, www.subterranean.org)

CONCOMBRI ZOMBI – "Daylight Comes" CD

Texas psychobilly, they proudly proclaim. And Texas psychobilly they no doubt are. Three piece, stand-up bass. Lyrically, they cover lots of ghoulish MISFITS territory. Musically, its pretty straightforward punk (albeit with a stand-up bass). Not so much swing, though there's a little SOCIAL DISTORTION twang in there. I'm not a fan of the genre, but they're certainly a cut above the METEORS, that's for sure. (RK)

(Hairball 8, www.hairball8.com)

CROWPATH – "Son of Sulphur" CD

CROWPATH is a band that in every review I've read gets compared to DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN and CONVERGE. To tell you the truth, that always turned me away from their records, so when I got this and put it on I was surprised to hear some fucking manic brutal grind, not at all like the past reviews I had seen. I'm not kidding here—I let this play for a few seconds and thought to my self, "This sounds like something that would be on Willowtip," and what do you know…Willowtip put this sweet mother out. *Booooyaaaa!* This has a really good, loud recording; you can hear everything going on here. Triggered drums saturated with double bass and blast beats, thick-ass guitar and crushing bass tone, and guttural high and low vocals a lot like the singer from KALIBAS. Willowtip really knows their grind and this CD just proves that further. If you like grind, metal, hardcore, or any form of brutal music, check this CD out. (NE)

(Willowtip, 134 S. Main St., Ste. A, Zelienople, PA 16063)

CUNT PUPPET – "Ann Heizer's Bush" EP

CUNT PUPPET... two, uh, *songs*…"First Comes the Beer, Then Comes the Bitches, Then We Have Sex All Night Long" *and* "Take Your Thumb Outta Your Mouth (And Suck On This)." Give me a fucking break! From the looks of 'em, the PUPPETS probably haven't spoken with a female, other asking their mothers to borrow money, in ten or twenty years. And their songwriting certainly isn't gonna get them any action! If these guys are aiming to shock and offend they're gonna have to try a lot harder (Cum-Fart-Cocktail, anyone?). But if they're trying to waste my time, CUNT PUPPET are doing an exceptionally good job… (VH)

(Sack O' Shit, PO Box 308, Kankakee, IL 60901)

DANIEL STRIPED TIGER – "Condition" CD

A chilled-out, high-end, contemporary take on the jazzed-up art-influenced post punk of yesteryear. Think GANG OF FOUR as possibly interpreted by FUGAZI but with more noodles, along the lines (somehow) of BEEFEATER. Despite the (apparently obligatory) tuneless horn playing on the first track "First Kite," the disc is a pretty sturdy jam from some seemingly sturdy folks. Extra love in the art and packaging department is a nice added plus to this disc. (BS)

(Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126, www.alonerecords.com)

DAS KAPITAL – "Denying the West" CD

Healthy-sounding music from a buncha well-appointed punkers with purpose. When I say "healthy-sounding," I mean free of disease or infirmity, physically fit, optimistic, confident, and in key most of the time. A slicked-up Americanized DOA might be a good reference point, I guess, though they don't sound much like 'em (it's more of an overall *feeling*, if you follow me). The age-old qualifier stands: I like the faster songs, but the slower songs don't really do it for me. End transmission! (JH)

(Johann's Face, PO Box 479164, Chicago, IL 60647, www.johannsface.com)

DEAD STOP – "Live for Nothing" 12"

I wasn't really into the first DEAD STOP LP that came out a couple years ago (too generic or something) but this new 11-song 12" is quite a bit better. Though the two records don't actually sound drastically different in style, the songwriting on this one is tighter and it has a real drive that is apparent from the opening track. It's that certain spark that somehow distinguishes a good record from the rest of the crap. For those unfamiliar with DEAD STOP, the band plays simple 1-2-1-2 burly hardcore reminiscent of early 80s New York groups such as the ABUSED or ANTIDOTE, though there is an inherent catchiness in the songs that I think can be traced back to early American hardcore bands like NEGATIVE APPROACH (from whom DEAD STOP surely takes much influence) incorporating the UK oi sound into their own. Regardless of the historical context, the end result is a solid record. (CS)

(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS – "Watch Yr Back" LP

…wow....this record is grabbing at my cock already and I'm only on the third song!!!!! If SUPERCHARGER had never broken up over a decade ago and had continued to grow and release records to this very day, then *this* would be SUPERCHARGER's ninth LP.....no doubt about it!!!!! As produced as this puppy is....it still has many of the elements that made all that garage music from years ago so fun.....!!!! It's simple, badly played and completely stoooopid!!!!! I fucking love it!!!! DIGGER & THE PUSSYCATS appear to be a two man outfit from Australia(?)......!!!! In The Red records should take notice of this duo....fly 'em out to Memphis and have Greg Cartwright produce 'em......!!!!! (SW)

(P Trash, www.ptrashrecords.com)

DISCARGA / H ZERO – split EP

H ZERO is from Spain. They had another release a couple of years ago so this is a follow up. These songs are straight-up hardcore—not thrash but hardcore. It is good stuff. Sung in Spanish, H ZERO maintains its power due to catchy songwriting. Good shit. DISCARGA from Brazil is definitely one of the leaders of the fast as fuck hardcore/thrash of recent years. They do a good job on this split; it is tight, quick and recorded well enough to pick up on all the juicy details. Good stuff. (MS)

(Mindless Mutant, Apdo 35322, 08029 Barcelona, SPAIN)

DISEASE CALLED MAN – "Corporate Killing Machine" EP

The first thing I noticed when I pulled the EP out is that they ripped off the DOOM logo. This is not necessarily a bad thing in my book. But unfortunately they don't really sound like DOOM, though I can hear some of DOOM'S influence on this band. Musically, DISEASE CALLED MAN can best be described as crusty metal. There are some occasional blast beats, lots of guitar wanking, and don't forget those throat busting vocals. This wasn't bad, but not quite what I expected upon first sight. (RC)

($3 ppd: Kill All The Grown Ups, 6218 Homespun Ln., Falls Church, VA 22044)

DISMAL – "Terra Plague" EP

I thought this was gonna be some grim grind, based on the dark satanic-looking layout, but I was fooled. I should have known with a name like DISMAL, it's d-beat…well no, I'm gonna change it to *o-beat* since these guys have an octopus theme going on here. So, yeah, this is crusty sounding d-beat with gruff, yelled vocals singing about the raid of nuclear hornets, the black dawn, and how the octopods are gonna take over Earth when the moon dies. This 7" is pretty good aside from the goofy lyrics; it has good packaging, and comes with a killer octopod poster drawn by the renowned hardcore artist Mike Bukowski. (NE)

(Solar Funeral, www.solar-funeral.org)

EDISON ROCKET TRAIN – "East River Delta" LP

It's not every day that a member of the RAUNCH HANDS comes forth with something new, but drummer Mike Edison has picked up a guitar and formed this new trash blues combo. While focusing more on authenticity than blowing your ears out, the record is kept from being a total snoozefest by up-front artsy touches courtesy of a couple prolific heavy-hitters from your darkest Crypt Records past. There's only a few people around capable off pulling this shit off these days, and as much as EDISON ROCKET TRAIN tries, I can't fully sign off. Definitely one for the more "Adult Contemporary" inclined in our readership. (MC)

(Human Bretzel, humanbretzel@netcourrier.com)

EL ETERNO ENEMIGO – "En Contra De Toda Esperanza" CD

There is an obvious influence from 90s straight edge hardcore bands like OUTSPOKEN and MOUTHPIECE going on here. This CD features nine songs of rhythmic, yet aggressive hardcore from this Argentinean sXe band. If you have been rocking your New Age record releases lately and are looking for a comparable band, then look no further. (RC)

(Waking The Dead, wakingthedead@gmail.com)

THE EXPECTORATED SEQUENCE – "Hairbomb" CD

I should give this CD to Rob to review—I know how much he loves bands with names like this. Instead of pretentious metalcore, we get pretentious screamo—otherwise, the Spit Squad is as bad as their ridiculous name would suggest. Think more spazzed out, less heavy or interesting ORCHID with some DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN tendencies and unlistenable, bratty vocals. Really, this is bad. Twice while attempting to review it, I couldn't make it more than four songs (that's about four minutes) before lunging for the eject button. (EL)

(New Romance for Kids, www.newromanceforkids.com)

FALL RIVER – "Lights Out" CD

Scathing, ten-song, techy-DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN/DEAD GUY influenced mid-tempo metal core. Never quite revving to full hardcore pitch and relying on quirky stop-and-start musical chops mixed with stoner/Sabbath-style riffs and/or groove. Screechy, gnarled female vocals start out screechy and gnarled and stay screechy and gnarled, so they convey little of the intensity they're capable of, as they flat line on one pitch. Similar to the Probe Records RINGWURM in brutal-vocalled sludging, but emphasizing the musical complexity and twists at the forefront; FALL RIVER never builds enough momentum to sink in the memory cells. Maybe if I studied the guitar tab. Boss recording, austere morgue artwork, and poetic and dark personal lyrics. (KS)

(Thorp, PO Box 6786, Toledo, OH 43612, www.thorprecords.com)

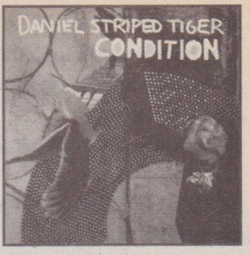
THE FEELERS – "Parts and Pieces" EP

About the time their *Learn to Hate the Feelers* LP was released, I saw these guys play at a clown-themed bar in Marin County. Kids who barely looked 18 were getting shit-faced and a fight broke out. It was a great show! And *Parts and Pieces* is a great fucking record. Lately terms like "77" and "*Killed by Death*" seem to have been thrown around far too liberally to mean anything, but fuck it, the FEELERS dish out dirty punk rock that fits the bill just as much as anything else. If you haven't heard these Ohio boys yet, FINAL SOLUTIONS make a fine reference point. Three clamoring tracks packed with snot, sweat, and distortion...limited to 500! (VH)

(P.Trash, www.ptrashrecords.com)

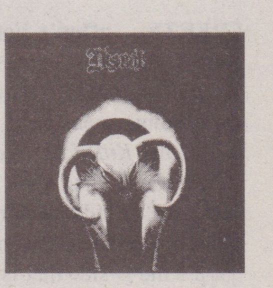
FIRE STILL BURNS – "Keeping Hope Alive" CD

I'm not familiar with this five-piece. But on this six-tracker they turn in very acceptable melodic hardcore emo ragers that bring to mind a less focused LIFETIME,



DAS KAPITAL

H ZERO - DISCARGA



EL ETERNO ENEMIGO

and early HOT WATER MUSIC. A couple of 'em have beards too (the band that is, not the tunes), so they wear their influences on their chin. (RK)
(Blackout!, www.blackoutrecords.com)

FIRST OFFENCE – "Stranded in the Combat Zone" EP

(Isn't that a line from a Billy Joel song?) Upbeat street punk from the Midwest. They compare themselves to the HUDSON FALCONS, the BRUISERS, and the DUCKY BOYS, and that's pretty close to the mark. Definitely for the skinheads-in-wife-beaters set. (AD)
(Step Up!)

F.L.A.K. – "Hitler Pope" EP

Pretty unimpressive hardcore here from this angry Pittsburgh group. They're punk as all hell, but these songs are just dismal, not helped by a terrible basement recording producing the thinnest, most non-threatening guitar sound possible. Nothing overwhelmingly awful, but not something I'd wanna hear twice. (EL)
(Police Target, PO Box 19205, Pittsburgh PA 15213, policetargetrecords@gmail.com)

FRANK CASTLE GONNA BREAK YOUR NECK! – "Join the Frank Castle's Army" EP

Despite the horrible name and pixelated computer layout, this record isn't that bad. If you are a fan of some of the more recent stuff coming out on 625, I would recommend looking into Russia's FCGBYN. They play some pretty solid fast-core with good lyrics that touch on things like Russian Nationalism, skating, and destroying the hippie culture. (CC)
(Give Praise, c/o Paul Sunderland, PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630)

FREEZE – "Don't Forget Me Tommy / I Hate Tourists"

Legit reissue of this collectors' holy grail. An absolute monster of a disc, up there with any of the *Killed by Death* big hitters. A different sound than their more hardcore later stuff, the A-side is synth-driven new wave snarl, not unlike a heavier POINTED STICKS, but it's the B-side that is the draw: total three-chord RAMONES-driven snot-punk. Classic. (TB)
(Schizophrenic, 17 West 4th St., Hamilton, Ontario, L9C 3M2, CANADA)

FRIDAY KNIGHT / PANTY SHANTY – split EP

I'll start with PANTY SHANTY, since that's the band I was most excited to hear on this split. The singer is the star of show here with soulful vox a la Ivy from ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT or the GITS' Mia Zapata. It's a joy to hear punk rock in this vein, as it is so rare, but I feel like this recording only hints at how good they could become with some more experience and confidence. Now onto FRIDAY NIGHT, who maybe has too much confidence. God damn them for writing the catchiest song in the world about doin' it with a strap-on. Now I'll be singin', "Take your, take your pants o-o-o-off…" in the grocery store, or some shit, without even realizing it until some old lady gives me the evil eye... Anyway, both of these bands play basic Southern punk, just as you would expect from a buncha Chattanooga drunks, but a bit slower and less gravelly than most 'Noog-core. Strap this one on! (PC)
($3 ppd: Plan-It-X South, 720 Pickens Ave., Pensacola, FL 32503)

FUCKED UP – "Generation" 12"

Canada's FUCKED UP has really been doing the punk community a favor by releasing so many limited EPs. Maybe in the future they could take it up a notch and work on lowering the pressing quantities down to, say…four, or negative twelve? Of course, another option would be to write interesting songs…but I guess CAREER SUICIDE takes care of that so FUCKED UP can concentrate on marketing, hype, and clever one-word song titles. Really, I tried to like this band. But record after record it just sounds like boring fucking New York mosh-core—I don't care if there is a girl in the band, there's no energy or attitude, and the singer sounds constipated! FUCKED UP is *the* most overrated band in hardcore today. But I mean, who wants to argue when you just spent what could have been two weeks worth of weed on one lousy record! Ya feel me, bro? A friend of mine has theorized that this band is popular because closet INTEGRITY fans and punks turned metalheads still need a "punk" band to listen to because they like the style of dress…I dunno, I'm fucking clueless. (VH)
(Slasher)

FUCKING CANARIES / OPERATION EATSHIT – split EP

OPERATION EATSHIT charges down the barricades with four tracks of solid, driving street punk with occasional bank-shots into TSOL *Dance With Me* territory. The vocals are harsh and snotty while lyrics swim in the armpit of cliché punk rebellion. Good shit from these legit French punk rockers. FUCKING CANARIES are nasty and slightly out of tune (in that good way) but overall still in the larval stages of tadpole-ism. (BS)
(brutaletrousse.free.fr)

GAUZE – "Fuckheads" LP

Ah yes, yet another GAUZE bootleg on vinyl. This LP contains their first full-length *Fuckheads* and their comp tracks from the *Outsiders* and *City Rockers* releases. By now I would imagine that a majority of you have heard GAUZE. If you have not, envision a musical ball of fast and ferocious punk rage with lots of catchy hooks and hard charging vocals. The early material on the compilations is much rawer than some of their later stuff. But the entire framework for their classic sound is already here. All you have to do is listen to the drum roll and build up intro to the song "Power" and you will be hooked for life. It should be noted that the quality of the music on this bootleg is actually quite good. Plus the insert booklet is very thorough with copies of the lyrics (with English translations added in), album covers, center labels, and posters. Obviously a worthy release, but this stuff should be essential on any format! (RC)
(bootleg)

GECKO BROTHERS – "Demolition of the Rehabilitation" CD

The GECKO BROTHERS would have you believe that they'd steal your liquor, make out with your woman, and beat you to a bloody pulp. I don't know the guys, but I can tell they don't care for much more than par-tayin' and rawkin'. Although they make a valiant (and incredibly well-produced) effort at adding some excitement to these much overdone themes, it's still hard rock masquerading as punk for the cowboy *and* trucker hat sects. (MC)
(Drunkabilly, Postbus 87, 9050 Ledgeberg 1, BELGIUM)

GOP – "England Sucks" EP

Cheeky fuckers—it's OK for me to bash my homeland, but you spotty kids from Portland who have never left your mum's house in the 'burbs better watch yer mouths or we'll be up there to knock your bollocks in. The ironic thing is that the title track actually sounds influenced by Limey bands of old, or even some of the *Killed by Death* Aussie bands (ROCKS, etc.). The rest of it is sloppy hardcore not unlike MIDDLE CLASS or even a substandard TEEN IDLES. Not bad at all. (TB)
(Blind Spot, 3534 S.E 52nd Ave., Portland, OR 97206)

HAIRCUTS – "Haircuts Are No Fun / Never See Her Again"

By far the most interestingly packaged release to come through these parts in some time. With a Rip Off-esque paper sleeve with

several tufts of human (band member?) hair strewn about the package, it's safe to say that they take their name seriously. What are we to make of them though? Well, the A-side is a plodding bit of punk primitivism, bringing to mind the best of the URINALS. Side B is far catchier and reminds me of BLANK ITS. In short, this is the sort of record that might fall through the cracks now, but will become the sort of thing that collectors and out-there hounds drool over in mere months. Not to mention the sort of thing you'd put on every "I Want To Impress You" mix tape you make from here on out. Just don't touch the sleeve that much. (MC)
(Sack O' Shit, www.pukeandexplode.com)

THE HECKLERS – "My Head" EP

At times these guys sound as if they are struggling just to play the right chords. At the same time, it's got a certain catchiness. They like to compare themselves to the DICTATORS. I can't say that I'd agree. The fact that they chose to cover the RUBINOOS should tell you something. They are barely competent and completely entertaining at the same time. (KK)
($4 ppd: Go Ape, PO Box 411, Brooklyn, NY 11211, www.fancymag.com)

HEARTBURNS / RONSKIBIITTI – split EP

Okay, here's my best stab at a description for RONSKIBIITTI: Finnish gangsta rap. I have to admit to not being a real big gangsta rap fan, and I'm not sure that I like it any better when the lyrics are in Finnish. These guys obviously grew up on the wrong side of the tracks in Helsinki. The HEARTBURNS fucking kick it up a notch on the flipside, covering the QUEERS, the RAMONES, and BEASTIE BOYS, along with a couple of originals. The originals are as catchy and fun as their choice of bands to cover might lead you to believe. Good shit. I like this record if only because it left me scratching my head. (KK)
(Hell's Tone, www.lprhardcore.net/htr)

HELLSHOCK – "Japan Tour 2005" EP

This is the limited 7" HELLSHOCK had for their October tour of Japan, hand-numbered out of 522. The HELLSHOCK dudes rip out two songs here: one original and a rockin' CHRON GEN cover. I've been a fan of HELLSHOCK since I got their first 7" and that first LP ripped as well—the same goes for this. Spitting out the gloomy depressing-core you've come to expect from these PDX stenchers. *Stenchcore for life!* (NE)
(no address)

THE HEURISTIC – "Parapraxes" CD

Spazzed-out, jerk-off, metallic tech-hardcore played and recorded really well, with many stellar fucking riffs to get the tech-nerd in you all wound up and attentive. There are grinding fast blast parts with odd-timed and unique catchy progressions, flawless punctuating stops, and lots of discordant chords, which combined are pretty original and interesting. The slower, softer tracks are short enough for my rapidly shortening attention span. This is extremely riff oriented; if you are looking for hooks, choruses, or something you might remember, you'd be hard pressed to find that here, but the playing is to the level that it's worth giving some of your attention. If you dig bands like DAUGHTERS, or CITY OF CATERPILLAR, you may want to keep an eye out for the HEURISTIC. (BS)
(Black Box, theheuristic.com)

HOW WE LOST THE WAR – "Jaywalker" EP

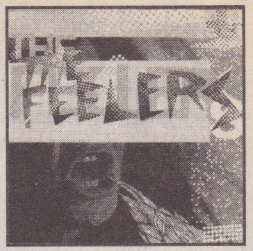
A strange creature, this noisy Brooklyn band. They're all over the place like a chaotic distorted mix of BLACK FLAG, RORSCHACH, SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, and BORN AGAINST, but unfortunately nowhere near as interesting as that sounds. For once, the songs are actually a little too short—they're over before they get anywhere or even establish a notable riff. The sound is messy and visceral and the vocalist does his best manic madhouse yelping, but for now it's all white noise window dressing without much substance underneath. I'd be curious to hear what they produce in time to come though. (EL)
(Banana Hammock, 341A 21st St., Ste. #1F, Brooklyn, NY 11215)

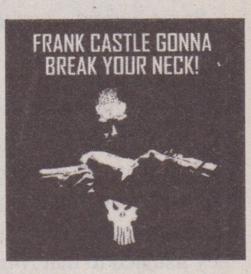
I EXCUSE / THE TIM VERSION – split EP

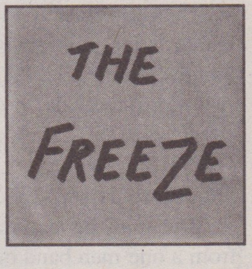
Yes! Yes! Yes! I have said it before and I will say it again: anytime you get a Snuffy Smile 7" to review, life is good. This time I get the added bonus of having it contain two bands I already enjoy. I EXCUSE from Kyoto plays punk rock that would be right at home besides DILLINGER 4 and the THUMBS. Their two songs on here are quick dirty ditties that are equal to anything on their full length. The TIM VERSION comes through with two songs that show why I consider them one of the most underrated bands today. The first song shows that the TIM VERSION shares the same sonic spectrum as I EXCUSE. The second song is an acoustic, almost country-sounding number that is also quite enjoyable. A total winner. (On a sad note, supposedly Yoichi is about to stop doing the label. Yoichi, from me, please don't.) (JF)
(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16-201 Daita, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo 155-0033, JAPAN)

INSIDE RECESS / EXISTENTIAL DILEMMA – split CD

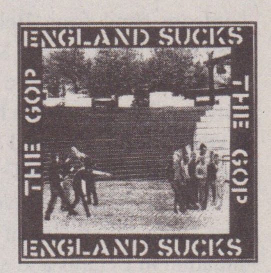
How to tell you're in a metal band: your singer's writing lyrics about pterodactyls. Cincinnati's INSIDE RECESS is indeed one such band and has succeeded in, to the best of my metal knowledge, passing MANOWAR at the finish line to be the first band to include a song about dinosaurs. Musically INSIDE RECESS is otherwise nothing special, they're a fairly competent semi-technical melodic death metal band fashioned after their Scandinavian contemporaries. The riffs are adequate but the drumming is not so great and the sparse, decidedly un-heavy recording sound doesn't do 'em any favors. EXISTENTIAL DILEMMA on the other hand, is an odd little egg. Favoring the slow brooding menace of old IRE, they mostly stick to a creeping, sludgy sound with good minor key melody and unique riffs. They mix things up a fair amount in their five tracks with acoustic interludes,

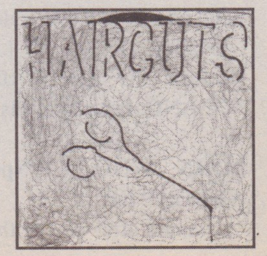






FUCKING CANARIES





some decent noise passages, and a short fast song too, but it's the slow doomy stuff that works best. Some of these songs are really pretty great—it's too bad they broke up, 'cause they had a good thing going. (EL)

(www.insiderecess.com, www.existentialdilemma.com)

JACK & THE RIPPERS – "I Think It's Over" LP

Some great ground-zero punk from Switzerland circa '77. The singer's accent is somewhere between a '76 NYC snarl and a mockney London drawl—he kind of sounds like the chimney sweep in *Mary Poppins* if played by one of the DEAD BOYS. The music is more power pop than street punk… I mean it's punk as fuck and all, but you can tell they listened to that *Nuggets* comp and maybe the FLAMING GROOVIES too… Recommended! Stand out songs for me were "I Think It's Over" and "I Feel Like a Tram," which wins randomest song title of this months review pile. (LG)

(www.dirtyfaces.de)

JEFFREY NOVAK ONE MAN BAND – "Southern Trash" LP

This may be the most racket I've heard from a one-man band outside of the occasional guy from Osaka with a tape machine and a bunch of synthesizers. None of that here, as J. NOVAK dishes out breakneck rock and roll noise with GUITAR WOLF as much a reference point as HASIL ADKINS. Bonus points (not that any are needed) for a PACK cover. Recommended. (DD)

(P. Trash, Peter Eichorn, Dornbuschweg 10, 33649 Bielefeld, GERMANY, www.ptrashrecords.com)

JIHEART – "Velvet Dictatorship" CD

Whoa, how about this— a straight edge hardcore band from Belarus (take a look at your atlas for that one). Musically, this is mid-tempo, metallic hardcore that seamlessly flows between fast parts and a heavy dose of choppy rhythm breaks scattered throughout the seven songs. Passionate female vocals belt out political lyrics in their native language. There is also some discussion of the current political situation in Belarus and a brief write-up on the scene and concerts in the CD insert. Overall the music was just OK, but the fact that the band was from Belarus definitely made it more appealing. (RC)

(Refuse, PO Box 7, 02-792 Warszawa 78, POLAND, refuserecords.prv.pl)

JOHN WOO – "Space Fight for an Anarchy" EP

Named after one of the few Christian filmmakers I can respect, JOHN WOO continues the fine run of bands that P. Trash has introduced to me to this year. Punk with a touch of garage and power pop, JOHN WOO has a sound that will please even the most jaded person. This release has three originals and one cover of the ADOLESCENTS "Kids of the Black Hole". It looks like all P. Trash releases, this one is also limited, this time to a small count of 101, just like the Dalmatians. (JF)

(P. Trash)

JUVENTUDE MALDITA / RESISTENCIA – "Total Punk" CD

Two bands from (I'm guessing) Brazil, the whole thing looks and sounds old—like 80s old—but the only date I can find anywhere is 2002. So, it's good, old school, angry and anthemic punk with a street feel from JUVENTUDE MALDITA and faster political punk from RESISTENCIA. Good stuff. (AD)

(Rebel Music, CX Postal: 70505 CEP 05013-990, Sao Paulo, SP BRAZIL)

KILL THE CLIENT – "Escalation of Hostility" CD

The makers of the best grind release of '04 (*Wage Slave*) return with their second album of absolutely furious whirlwind grind, the chaotic sound of which likens them to the second coming of BRUTAL TRUTH in my opinion. I wouldn't go so far as to say this is better than *Wage Slave*, but *Escalation of Hostility* certainly doesn't disappoint and easily maintains the same level of grind mastery. Every member of the band stands out—the guitars are a hornet swarm of manic intensity, the drums are an unrelenting storm of battery and the singer—damn, this guy has one of the most rabidly barked deliveries of all time. And he's got intelligent, unique lyrics to back him up—fiercely confrontational political invectives mix with topics like priest molestation ("In God We Thrust" – how great is that?), child sedatives, overpopulation, and workers' rights. Along with the blazing speed, they've also added a couple long slow doomy tracks *a la* GRIEF, the second of which, album closer, "Negative One," has a simply punishing riff. Well, this should be obvious by now—this one gets my highest recommendation. (EL)

(Willowtip, willowtip.com)

KRIEGSTANZ – "Dig for Victory" EP

The final four tracks of blown out and dark, down-tuned hardcore from this Dutch punk band with sorrowful, dark riffs and intros *a la* HIS HERO IS GONE, DAMAD, or KYLESA. Musically, this is punchy, straightforward thrash with the occasional low-end riff charging around a melodic core. Throaty TRAGEDY/DEVOID OF FAITH style shouts tackle war, politicians, day-to-day drudgery, and resistance. Solid. (KS)

(Opiate, opiaterecords@ hotmail.com)

KUNG-FU ESCALATOR – "Hate My Balls" 10"

Two members of the FATALS slow things down, way down. In this incarnation they are going for more of a lo-fi bluesy feel. There is still a lot of distortion, but there are also some long, mellow, spacey garage songs. It's a nice change of pace and an absolutely fantastic record. (CK)

(Yakisakana, 51, rue Pierre Renaudel, 76 100 Rouen, FRANCE, ronan.yakisakana@ wanadoo.fr)

KUSSE KANNIBALERNE – "Monstre" EP

This band is from Denmark, doing punk/hardcore with double bass drum bits. "Den Slags" is the best track on this EP. I think the band is on some horror trip—there are no lyrics on here so judging by song intros and the artwork I came to that conclusion. We have here fuzzy guitar sound, heavy bass, double bass drums, gory cover art…all this adds up to a spooky release. I'm so scared. (MS)

(Rabalder, www.rabalderrecords.funus.dk)

KYRE & DUUNARIT – EP

KYRE & DUUNARIT from Finland have got a fucking bad mind-fuck for you cretins! This satanic skinhead EP has nine nasty songs that are both melodic and dangerous! Since this is sung in Finnish, with lyrics printed in Finnish, American skins will have to just fucking run with it. The gruff vocals combined with the brutal guitar/bass/drum assault will have you bouncing off the largest skinhead in the bar. The enthusiasm is readily apparent and these fuckers actually know how to play their instruments! There must be beer involved. There will be male bonding for sure! Fucking great! Contact Hell's Tone Records for your copy of the energetic oi/skinhead rock 'n' roll gem! (BR)

(Hell's Tone, www.lphardcore.net/htr)

THE LEGENDARY STARDUST COWBOY / THE WESTERN DARK – split EP

......ugggg!!!! ....two sides of shit!!!!! The LEGENDARY STARDUST COWBOY is being backed by Klaus Fluoride, Joey Myers and Jay Rosen.....big fucking deal!!!!! The WESTERN DARK side is just as sleepy as the STARDUST COWBOY side......except they're supposedly a rock 'n' roll

outfit.....even the shirtless hot stoner dude on the cover can't save this release from utter boredom.....!!!!!!!! Whose idea was it to put this little shit platter together????? You should kill yourself *now*!!!!! (SW)
(Classic Bar Music, no address)

LOBOTOMIA – LP
LOBOTOMIA is very proficient at playing the frantic d-beat/thrash crossover style of punk rock that Brazil has been known for by those with a taste for raw hardcore. This is a reissue, and although I'm not convinced it's quite a classic, it's really good nonetheless. Much like Swedish classics such as ANTI-CIMEX or MOB 47 in style, and the production and sound of this recording is really good. This record would be a good pick for any fan of raw, fast punk—fans of Italian hardcore take note. Most of the lyrics are about war, and still hold true today. (WK)
(Black Water, PO Box 5223, Portland, OR 97208-5223)

LYME REGIS – "It Starts with the Band" EP
Ex-members of the FM KNIVES and PRETTY GIRLS and on one of the bestest record labels on this big damn planet. A winner straight of the blocks, I say. More the JAM than BUZZCOCKS, mixed in with some of the sloppy cuteness of the much missed the FONDLED. A dirty production with a controlled looseness adds to the feel, all kept together with songs that'll make ya sing and sing and, well, sing. We've got a winner folks. (SD)
(SmartGuy, 3288 21st St. #32, San Francisco, CA 94110, www.smartguyrecords.com)

MAKILADORAS – "In Eigen Hand" LP
45 RPM 12" of fast-paced, tight, hammering, and beyond proficient WOLFBRIGADE-ish hardcore *a la* the European appropriation of TRAGEDY/FROM ASHES RISE influences, but laden with a bit more burly 1980s speed metal riffing and double bass breakdowns. Scathing yet shrill female vocals sung in Dutch occasionally trade off with growlier male vocals, and come off as one-dimensional and sub par to the inventiveness of the music, holding basically the same pattern, intensity, and attack from track to track, leaving the overdrive of the music to carry the impact and mood. The lyrics, deluxe gatefold packaging, and thematic core of the record concerning the environment, man's place in it, and genetic engineering are all spot on. (KS)
(Loderbrock, PO Box 25453, Salt Lake City, UT 84125-0453, www.loderbrock.com)

MALA SANGRE – "Born Into Warfare" EP
This isn't bad. I don't quite think that the recording makes the cut for a vinyl release, but there is a lot of potential. There are far too many bands releasing records right now to be able to recommend that anyone buy this, or half of the mediocre recordings passing for a release. That said, I would look out for this band in the future. Straightforward punk that sounds youthful and enraged. Just give me a good recording and some original artwork and I think I would be hooked. This record comes enclosed in a patch decorated with multiple AXEGRINDER rip-off drawings. Not exactly revolutionary, but nice effort. (WK)
(Guss Alvarez, 11121 Lower Azusa Rd., El Monte, CA 91731)

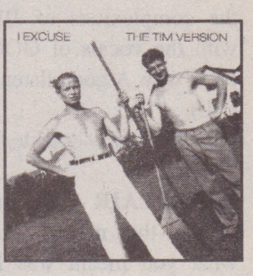
THE MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE / THE SPIRIT ANIMALS – split EP
Two very similar bands playing jangly-yet-distorted (I don't know how they manage to do that), sloppy-yet-together, sweet, sing-along pop punk, the kind that can only be properly appreciated at a basement party. If it were a battle of the bands, I'd have to pick THE SPIRIT ANIMALS as the winner, with their more desperate vocal qualities and general hookiness. But this is not a competition (of course!) and MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE do well too, having a little more party in their pants, and one hell of a catchy chorus in "Ghost Song." Nice package, and nice looking bunch of kids. (PC)
($4 ppd: Crafty, 75 Earley St., Bronx, NY 10464, www.craftyrecords.net)

MEAN REDS / WIRES ON FIRE – split CD
Two two-song CDs packaged together—bizarre idea eh wot? Both bands are screaming indie-rock in the let's-do-MUDHONEY-faster school that I have just identified, which I suspect is not in the same league as nailing down the SARS virus. While neither of these bands made me shave my pubes, I could also imagine myself perhaps lingering with a beer in my hand as they opened for the Band I Came to See. "Wow, that's a really sympathetic ALICE COOPER cover…huh…nah, I'm gonna watch another song, I'll meet you in a sec." (RW)
(Buddyhead, PO Box 1268, Hollywood, CA 90078)

METH AND GOATS – "Mountain" CD
Another fine dose of noisy, butt-edged punk turdlings from the METH AND GOATS camp. The drummer and bass player do most of the wankery, each song is driven by short measures of bass and drum loop-style playing, while disaffected vocals and searing guitar hold down the rhythm duty. The recording is really raw, and the playing is pretty right on. "Rat Trail Revolution" is more straight to the point — an off-kilter but totally engaging tune, and my favorite on the disc. It has a heavier sound than the rest of the songs, reminiscent of the CONVOCATION OF…. (BS)
(Electric Human Project, 500 S. Union St, Wilmington, DE 19805, www.electrichumanproject.com)

MILHOUSE USA – LP
A great sounding NoCal punk band that came and went a few years ago without so much as a blip on the radar… How did this happen? Oh, I see—they're from Sacramento! As we have come to expect with unknown Sacto bands, MILHOUSE fuckin' rules! Or ruled, rather. Strong female vocals sung with soul and guts, and a band that can play solidly at a variety of tempos from killer hook-laden thrash to slower, older sounding tracks that have a WEIRDOS/AVENGERS-like mood. The record-

HOW WE LOST THE WAR
JAYWALKER EP



TOTAL PUNK
Juventude Maldita / Resistência

KILL THE CLIENT

STARDUST
COWBOY

MALA SANGRE

ing has a live-sounding quality that adds to the already raw feel of the music. Order this fucker now! (PC)
($10 ppd: Sacramento, PO Box 705, Sacramento, CA 95814)

MILLOY – "More Than a Machine" CD

These UK folks have certainly settled into a sound. A mix of emo punk with a bit of prog chops and powerful vocals. Musically this has the complexities of JIMMY EAT WORLD with the vocals of GOOD RIDDANCE in a punk way. A good listen for the hoodie crowd. (RL)
(Crackle, www.crackle.freeuk.com)

MINDFLAIR – "Stagnation" CD

Ha—that name makes me laugh. I think what you meant was MIND "FLARE" but you're German, so I guess that's an easy mistake. These guys are a pretty sick grind outfit with a great, fuzzed-out guitar tone that works perfectly with the super-tight breakdown mosh parts they do on every song. Actually most of this is pretty mid-pace—it's fast but they don't hit blast beats much. The guitars never stop moving though—they're almost like a heavier, grindier SPAZZ in that respect. Really, there are some great riffs and song structures here—the mosh parts are so weird and angular, it makes for "fun" listening somehow. Maybe it should be "flair" after all. (EL)
(Bones Brigade, www.bonesbrigaderecords.com)

MINGERS – "Passion Not Fashion" CD

Loved the 7" by these kids and the CD is more of the same. Full-on punk rock like it's supposed to be, with wicked female vocals. The style and sentiments remind me of the East Coast band the PROFITS or even a femme fronted OI POLLOI. It's very 10-years-ago, which is by no means a bad thing. In fact, it's great to see folks playing straight-up political punk again. The only downside to the disc is a slight metallic edge to the drums and guitar; other than that, it's a keeper. (TB)
(www.themingers.com)

MODERNETTES – "Get It Straight" CD

A band that helped pave the way for the slew of pop punk imitators that riddled the late 80s and early 90s. The QUEERS, VINDICITIVES, SLOPPY SECONDS, and even the mighty SCREECHING WEASEL owe so much to these overlooked Vancouverans. Hailing from the early 80s and mixing the basic burst of punk with the skinny tie new wave melody of early BLONDIE, the MODERNETTES come of as a brasher POINTED STICKS with a hint of more matured YOUNG CANADIANS. 25 tracks in all encompassing the two EPs, three tracks of the *Gone But Not Forgotten* LP and a host of rare live takes. For lovers of melody and junkies of quick fix pop, this is surely a must. (SD)
(Sudden Death, Cascades, PO Box 43001, Burnaby BC, V5G 3HO CANADA, www.suddendeath.com)

MOD LASER / OHMYGODOHMYGOD – split EP

Put your hands together in traditional clap-track style (like a trained seal works best) and start singing *nah-nah…nah-nah-naaah* X3. Be sassy. Now sub that for something like, "Get down to the ground." Switch in anything that rhymes at your leisure, refrain from being creative, and remember to repeat. Now, be really fucking sassy "Aaw, aawhh, aawhhhh, naawhhh…aohhh!!!!!" Now you're in a band just like MOD LASER…Killer. OHMYGODOHMYGOD delivers some solid rock and swagger with progressive pop rock (of the punk variety) threading the majority of their songs. The tracks are well recorded, well conceived, and solidly executed; off kilter guitar melodies and inventive rhythm combos combined with decent dynamic changes, and harmonized leads and vocals make this an unique and good listen. (BS)
(Terrordactyl, Josh Malone, PO Box 8302, Moscow, ID 83843)

NEW WAVE BLASPHEMY – EP

Anthemic, blown-out sonic warfare from Pensacola, Florida. NWB plays discordant, distressed, riff-oriented noisy hardcore with a lot of energy, heart, and grind. Riffage is comparable to but not a total clone of bands such as COMBAT WOUNDED VETERAN, PIG DESTROYER, ORCHID, and the LOCUST. I'm just going to pretend that the shabby Casio-esque electronic, scream-drenched intro part never happened. Yes, there is a lot of scream and there are also clear, notable threads of the emo, but damn I just won't say that fucking word. The packaging is great and over the top: triple-ink-stamped, screen-printed, wood-cut, spray-painted, hand-numbered, black- on-black print insert with lyrics individually hand-written with lemon juice (the MRR copy even has blood on it). Fuck yes! But, hey…y'all forgot to wax-seal the thing with the No Idea logo. Nice stuff. (BS)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

NOFX – "All My Friends in New York / I, Melvin"

Fuck, this is awful… My girlfriend hates me, I accidentally pissed on the floor last night and she was left to clean up the stink (yes, sometimes my piss stinks). I could be at home weaseling my way back into her good books instead of reviewing this steamy stinking turd of a record, thank god it only lasts for three minutes. (SD)
(Fat Wreck)

NO VIOLENCE – "Invencivel" CD

Think about bands like DS-13 and TEAR IT UP, then add in some more memorable SIDE BY SIDE and DON'T NO straight edge hardcore riffs, any number of power violence drum parts, and you may end up with an idea of what NO VIOLENCE sounds like. NO VIOLENCE should be required listening for anyone who likes memorable, ferocious, and fast old school hardcore. Their lyrics aren't as easily accessible as their Swedish or American counterparts because they are sung in Portuguese, but the time has come to end the language barrier that Western punk has so long been a prisoner of. Get some culture, slobs. The lyrics are translated and are nicely done with good mix of interpersonal and overtly political songs, not just the same boring crap. Well worth the postage, so don't hesitate. (WK)
(Refuse, PO BOX 7, 02-792 Warszawa 78, POLAND, refusexresist@prv.pl)

ONLY ONES – "Remains" LP

Is there a more underrated first-wave punk band than these boys? Their studio records, speaking generally, don't do them any big favors when stacked up against their ideological brethren such as the VOIDOIDS, SAINTS, TELEVISION and the Stiff Record label's more song-oriented groups like IAN DURY & THE BLOCKHEADS. But their best songs are drugged-out, lazy monsters that drop their hairy paws onto your shoulders and push you down into your seat, unable to move. "Lovers of Today" is one of my favorite songs from the first wave of punk, and (significantly) it was an indie release—Pure Anthem City. This is an odds-and-sods LP with lots of great tracks interspersed with some throwaways, and I wouldn't recommend it for first time callers. For that crucial first exposure, pick up their *Peel Sessions* LP from…somewhere. For all you converts out there, or the fence-sitters, here's another one to add to the groaning shelf. There's a lot more to this band than "Another Girl Another Planet." (RW)
(Get Back, Abraxas srl via Aretina, 25-50069 Sieci, Firenze, ITALY)

ORIGINAL THREE – "Unplug" 7"

Hmm, slightly crap pressing sabotages the beginning…there we go—gravelly vocals kicking a ruckus with a calmly menacing git-heavy attack. The personification of mid-

tempo here; a definite attempt to avoid the "Feigned Frenzy Trap," which means we're talking songwriting. It ain't quite here on the A-side, but the flip does a decent job of scraping the strings and getting the hairs up. Borders on toss-off overall. (RW)
(Shake Your Ass, www.syarecords.it)

PEDESTRIANS – "Future Shock" LP

You know when a band you like puts out a record that so totally surpasses your expectations for them that it renders what they did before it almost a moot point? That's kind of how I feel about this PEDESTRIANS LP. I liked their demo and their debut 7" on Chicago's excellent Southkore label quite a bit, but this record—their first full-length—of dance-around-your-room, pump-your-fists-and-sing-along punk has already left an impression on me that is sure to linger for quite a while beyond my time in this review room. *Future Shock* is pretty much mid-tempo throughout, but remains aggressive with punchy bass lines, memorable guitar parts, and smart lyrics. I don't have an immediate band reference point for them, but that's a good thing right? I am happy to listen to punk rock that isn't content to paint by numbers. Suffice it to say, this band plays driving punk rock that manages to sound both classic and totally fresh all at once—maybe it's their unique song writing sense that makes this one of the hands-down classics of 2005. The vinyl is self-released, but the CD is on Criminal IQ for the more digitally inclined. (GN)
(Residue, PO Box 478101, Chicago, IL 60647)

PINKEYE – "How to Rob…" EP

Featuring members of hardcore darlings FUCKED UP and CAREER SUICIDE, I knew this was going to be good. No disappointment here. Taking riffage from both of the aforementioned, this is a *Pick Your King*-era POISON IDEA smack in the kisser. Good but not half as good as FUCKED UP or CAREER SUICIDE. But then again, who is these days? (TB)
(Slasher)

PKADORES – "¡Kriticado!" EP

Street punk *en español* ("*calle punk*," perhaps?—they mention the *calle* in every song!) from Chicago's Southside. This is well-played, memorable Oi/punk (more punk than Oi) with sing-along choruses, bopping bass lines, and the best saxophone bits since X-RAY SPEX. PKDORES has a timeless sound—if you didn't know better, you might think this is some obscure classic record you never heard before. A totally solid release. Can't wait to hear more. (PC)
(Intoxicado, PO Box 220342. Chicago, IL 60622)

THE PRISONERS – "Crash! Bam! Boom!" CD

From the looks of this you'd expect another Estrus or SUPERSUCKERS-type band singing about drinkin' and cars. Although this has a touch of that, these guys dish out rockin' pop with good hooks and the "ohhhhs" and "ahhhhs" of pop punk's glory days. Tight and skilled playing to boot. Overall, this is a good full-length. (RL)
(www.theprisoners.com)

PURE SPITE – "Highness Kills Hangover" LP

Is bad psychobilly worse than bad Oi?…and the debate rages on. (SD)
(Drunk 'n' Roll, info@drunknroll.de)

RACEBANNON – "The Inevitable: Singles and Rarities 1997-2005" 2xCD

Quick Save Hadji and bandit! Tracing 29 tracks backwards from multiple recent split 7"s and compilation tracks to early vinyl-only 7"s and gradually rawer demos, Indiana's RACEBANNON dredges the modern, angular landscape of metallic noise hardcore, like bastard children of AmRep's TODAY IS THE DAY, HELMET, or even BUTTHOLE SURFERS, with psych-rock experimentation and RORSCHACH thrash abrasiveness but with odd vocal creepings that are reminiscent of CRUCIFUCKS in their off-balance weirdness. Instead of just changing the sequence of the time changes from song to song, they retain and weave and experiment around a song-structure core (central to their early more simplistic sound), which keeps it from being audible math homework. Inventive and interesting, with a deluxe, fold-out digipack and discography notation. No lyrics. (KS)
(Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13125, www.alonerecords.com)

RADIATORS FROM SPACE – "Live at the Southend Kursaal 1977" LP

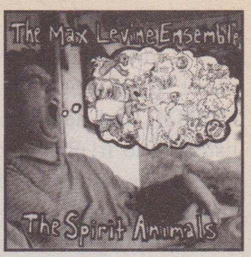
Soundboard recordings sometimes suffer from forward vocals and abnormally restrained guitars, and this late '77 gig from the RADIATORS suffers from this fault to a certain extent. "Press Gang" almost escapes from this fate, and versions of the singles "Psychotic Reaction" and "Enemies" almost do justice to the originals. Less punk than Raw Records-ish rock 'n' roll, the better tracks capture the tough energy of a widely overlooked UK band. Limited edition of 480 colored vinyl copies, and comes with a very cool color poster. Some good songs here. (SS)
(www.rejectedrecords.cjb.net)

RAT TRAPS – "Tennessee Rock 'n' Roll" EP

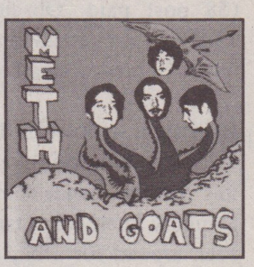
Finally! The debut single from one of my favorite new bands. I had the pleasure of catching RAT TRAPS live twice this year and I was left a sweaty, drunken mess on both occasions. No doubt some of you are wise enough to have heard JEFF NOVAK on his recent one-man band releases, but RAT TRAPS are a different animal all together. As the title might suggest, their sound is right in line with some of this region's heavyweights and delivered with the sincerity and abandon that one has come to expect from REATARDS, KAJUN SS, and CARBONAS releases. RAT TRAPS can hold their own with any of 'em. Fantastic. (MC)
(www.myspace.com/yourpermanentrecords)

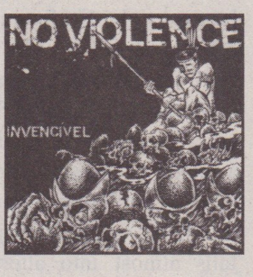
REACTIONARY 3 / TRUE NORTH – split LP

I've been a big REACTIONARY 3 fan since getting their first 7" for review a couple of years ago, and I



MEAN REDS
WIRES ON FIRE





THE ORIGINAL THREE

finally got to see them live back in the summer of 2004, which was when they told me about their upcoming split with TRUE NORTH...and here I am in December 2005 listening to it! Split records always seem to take a long time to come out. Too many cooks spoil the broth or something. I can thankfully say it was worth the wait—the R3 songs on this release far surpass the stuff on that original 7" in their playing and passion. Imagine the sound of your favorite Gainesville bands through a MINUTEMEN/MISSION OF BURMA filter, and you've just about captured their sound. You probably know what TRUE NORTH sound like by now, and their stuff on this record doesn't sound all that different from the quirky post-hardcore on their earlier albums. Oh, and don't let me forget the beautiful letterpress packaging. (AM)

($8 post paid: Obscurist Press, PO Box 13077, Gainesville, FL 32604, obscurist.press@gmail.com)

RIPPERS – "Raw Evil" EP

Despite this being my first introduction to this Spanish band, some poking around the almighty Internet has taught me that they have been around for a bit, and have a couple of other records out. Some poking around ye olde MRR record library winds up proving the Internet right. Go figure. This 7"—hand numbered 212 out of 300 and hand-stamped as well—features three songs of not-quite-even-mid-tempo, dark, early SoCal influenced punk rock. This is pretty good stuff, calling to mind a bunch of classic melodic punk but no one band in particular. I must say, I do wish that this band would play just a bit faster—this falls almost into alterna tempos at times, though overall this is a good three-song EP of brooding, melancholic punk rock that has already managed to get stuck in my head, even after only a couple of listens. Fine stuff. (GN)

(Ripper, PO Box 11, 43720 L'arboc, SPAIN, www.therippers.net)

RISE AND SHINE – "The Anthems of Summer" CD

Despite the uplifting names, these chaps fail to break through like the proverbial shaft of gold. They're not quite a stream of bat's piss, but certainly struggle to distinguish themselves (to these old, tired, jaded ear flappers, anyways) from every other emo/screamo/hardcore/HOT WATER MUSIC/KNAPSACK wannabe/wish-they-could-be out there. Pity really. (RK)

(Sleep/Walk , www.sleepwalkrecordings.com)

ROCK THE LIGHT – "The Summer We All Got Laid" CD

...is the Winter of My Discontent. I already heard hairy-chested "indie KISS" fronting like this from the TIGHT BROS back in the late 90s, and five years of stewing in the used bins has not mellowed my indifference. Not as corn-metal as the aforementioned, and they occasionally break into melodic flurries that bring the FM KNIVES to mind (hmmm…), but overall it's a frothy skateboard video waiting to happen. And you know what, I have no problem with that happening, see ya later. Good-natured but forgettable. (RW)

(Cock Energy, no address)

THE RUBINOOS – "Hurts Too Much" LP

.....I can't begin to tell all you punk rock dumb fucks just how much I like wimpy BEATLES/BEACH BOYS/BAY CITY ROLLERS-style power-pop....!!!!! I'm just old enough to have music like this speak to me!!!!! I eat pussy with this kinda sappy shit playing in the background!!!! If you're not old enough to *get it* then you can just *kiss my ass*!!!! The RUBINOOS were a Berkeley pop band from the 70s that recorded two LPs for Beserkley Records (MODERN LOVERS, EARTHQUAKE, GREG KIHN BAND) but never really had any sort of commercial success....!!! This particular platter is a collection of 16 demos that were recorded in 1979 for a third LP that was never released!!! The sound quality is dynamite all the way through....no flaws!!!! The sleeve even comes complete with liner notes by Ken Sharp who happens to be the world's biggest RASPBERRIES fan and personal butt-buddy.....!!!!! How can anyone go wrong with such an impressive package!!!!! (SW)

(Rave Up, Via Crispolti 16-00159 Roma, ITALY, web.tiscali.it/raveup)

SALESMAN – "Trendsetters" CD

Five solid tracks of abrasive, emo, seesaw rock out of Birmingham, Alabama. AT THE DRIVE IN or AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY THE TRAIL OF THE DEAD style loud-to-quiet, melodic-to-abrasive music zigzagging at mid-tempo with harsh, caustic vocal-spews over quiet guitar parts and melodic backing choruses as well as the explosively loud detonations. Surprisingly well played and recorded for being packaged in a "ten minutes or less" Xerox cover. Song titles range from "The Sloth" to "License to Fornicate," but the meaning remains a mystery; there's no lyric sheet!! (KS)

(House of Love, www.salesmanrock.com)

SCAT RAG BOOSTERS – CD

I'm pretty tired of our European friends and their blues fixations. I know, I know, they've been fixated for 45 years, but I'm oh so tired of these same old chord progressions that fail to break the crust on the corpse's eyes. This is by no means a slam of this record, which avoids many of the general pitfalls of this genre: corniness, smarm, Elvis-ness, squeaky-clean production, hyper-fuzz distorted vocals, etc. But it doesn't have that teenage desperation, or that over-the-top showmanship danger buzz, or the Chilton/Jeffrey Lee Pierce songwriting edge, or, or…any of that kind of stuff. It's a well-intentioned plod, so I'll stick to the GIBSON BROS. this month. (RW)

(Delta Pop, 633 S Bernardo Ave., Suite 113, Sunnyvale, CA 94087)

SFH – CD

Strange, the chord structures in the beginning are just like "Die Hard" by legendary early 80s Aussie punkers LOCAL PRODUCT, but that's just the Cosmic Rock Brain channeling through these boys. The rest of the CD quickly dampens the initial pulse racing, being a genial blend of harmony-pop-rock riding along a nice four-four beat that screams late-90s Lookout stable. Not life changing, or affirming, but not inspiring any special hatred either. Slouching towards the $1 bin... (RW)

(Kicking Ass, www.shitfromhell.com)

SHELL SHOCK – "Born to Kill" CD

It's always nice to see a band with a great demo and EP step it up a notch and put out an even better full length. SHELL SHOCK bring us 15 tracks inspired by early 80s American hardcore with no frills. Their songs don't tread any new ground lyrically, and neither do they musically. Hey, I'm not complaining. Good stuff. (CC)

(Puke N Vomit, PO Box 3455, Fullerton, CA 92834)

SKIT YOUTH ARMY – "Suburban Nightmare" EP

Thrash, thrash, thrash here from France. I am pretty bored with this style of stuff; there is an overkill of it these days. SKIT YOUTH ARMY does a good job at it and if you are a fan of the rapid drumming, blasty style of stuff, you will most likely love this record. "Pouri City Thrasssshhhhhh Attack" is the best track on this record. Go buy this and run around in circles with your circle-pitting boyfriends. (MS)

(Wee Wee, 25 Rue Goudouil, 31240 St. Jean, FRANCE)

SO I HAD TO SHOOT HIM – "Alpha Males and Popular Girls" CD

Here's an example of the phenomena of being able sing well and carry a vocal tune but not being able to restrain from over-singing and showboating constantly. The vocals croon out weak-as-hell vocal progressions of utter nonsense over tech-metal influenced hardcore, drowning every measure of every verse. File under: fucked up shit. (BS)

(Crucial Blast, PO Box 364, Hagerstown, MD 21741, www.crucialblast.net)

SOVIET VALVES – "Sight That Harms/Gaze That Harms" EP

The little promo sheet informs me that this EP sounds like the BUZZCOCKS, and Little Promo Sheety is no full of sheety—the title track is almost a cover of Mr. Devoto's "Time's Up" from that group's debut EP. But, it's changed (oh, *appropriated*!) enough that it comes off charming, *a la* FM KNIVES, rather than clueless. The vocals from these Aussies are mannered, the lyrics dryly observed and weary, and the shot is to the same part of the brain that the ONLY ONES were aiming for. Then on the flip they drop their pants on me and run around like loonies, blowing my whole treatise. But, the guitars stay chime-y and controlled throughout. A cynic would accuse them of sounding a little too much like the STROKES, but a *naïf* like me only hears the positives here. If they aren't careful, some Big Label will snap them up and I won't be able write about their Big Sellout…careful boys. (RW)

(Smart Guy, 3288 21st St. #32, San Francisco, CA 94110)

STEP ON IT – "Speak for Yourself" CD

This is a pretty great, inventive combination of elements of Bridge Nine-esque youth crew replete with gang vocal choruses, CARRY ON style, fast, full-throttle hardcore that almost reaches blast beat pitch and speed, and rock-laden hooks and riffage forged in the blown-out, noisy character of DIY hardcore. High energy with old style vocal clarity fronting eight tracks of voluminously loud, precisely-executed thrash, this refreshingly sounds like a band doing an old style but taking full advantage of what you can do with recording and sound *now*. Lyrics are in the pit, on friendships, and facing discontent and life's dead ends, ringed with a hint of CHARLES BRONSON-style sass. Extraneous phony needle scratches, the hidden "shades of DYS" dub track distract from the ripping bombardment. (KS)

(Collective, www.collectiverecords.com)

SWEATSHOP BOYS – "Is Your Mind Diseased?" CD

A decent band that seems to be a mix of NOFX, early BAD RELIGION, and a dash of college rock *a la* HÜSKER DÜ. Not all that original in the sea of NOFX clones but this band does have some good tunes with some nice tempo changes and good screaming melodic vocals. (RL)

(www.sweatshopboysmusic.com)

SYLVESTER STALINE – CD

When I first took a gander at this CD I thought it was gonna be some fuckin' techno dance crap—the cover has David Hasselhoff dancing with some freaky ladies and there is a rainbow coming off Hasselhoff…*Anyway*, the music turns out to be alright. It's fast most of the time and has some slow, moshy parts. There is a picture of a hard-ass thug motherfucker in the liner notes saying, "Don't fuck with my fastcore homies, bitch!" The vocals are a high pitched scream (think CHARLES BRONSON) with some yelled backups and a little bit of Cookie Monster vox. Let's touch base on the liner notes a little more: this band is stupid, with songs like "Sorry I Didn't Know She Was Only 13" and "I Drive Drunk to Smash Cop Kids." They also have a picture of some buff-ass freak pointing with a quote saying, "If You Don't Like This Band Today I Will Rape Your Girlfriend Tomorrow!" I get the feeling these guys are losers playing pseudo-porn grind, and if you ask me they are trying a little too hard. I think they are from France. 33 songs on this gem of a CD. (NE)

(Bones Brigade, BP 31, 62140 Hesdin, FRANCE)

SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE – "Not Here to Make Friends" LP

Fuck yes! This is the most supreme study in negativity to appear in these pages in many an issue! SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE thrashes through twelve bitter indictments of society, friendship, romance, and government. The mid-tempo punk music is bristling with anger! Mr. GG ALLIN would be proud how SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE celebrates human frailty and dysfunctional relationships. In "Recharge" SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE sings, "One last laugh as I watch you die." This is an emotion many of us have experienced. In the title cut, "Not Here to Make Friends," SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE offers, "I'm not sorry if I hurt your feelings…Now it's time for you to grow up and realize this world's a cold hard place." Fucking A! This is great shit!!! Like the cold kiss of a wet fist, this record will wake you fucks up! (BR)

(Urban Death Mission, c/o Ian Ryan, 4746 Friendship Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15224, ianryan@gmail.com)

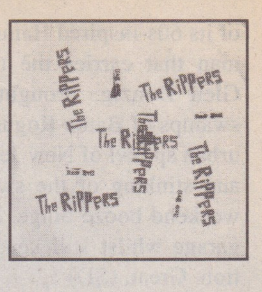
SYZSLAK – "When Demons Ride Angels" CD

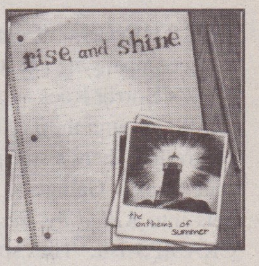
I've heard good things about this band, yet have not had the chance to hear them till now, and they aren't bad. This has a weird sound, kind of like dirty, driving crust with stony riffage, done in a tasteful way not like they are throwing all these weird music styles together in a mishmash of riffs. Fronted by a female singer/bass player with scathing vocals, singing about life's daily tragedies of war, depression, and drugs. A lot of songs on this CD rip and some of them are not so ripping, but that's life. (NE)

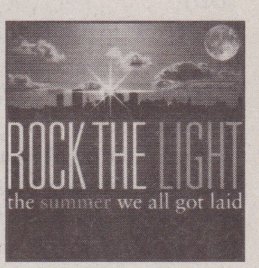
(World Eater, PO Box 42728, Philadelphia, PA. 19101)

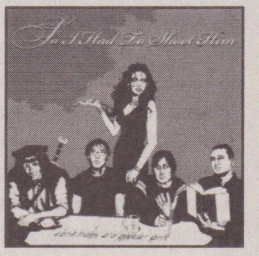
THIS DAMN TOWN – "This Time" EP

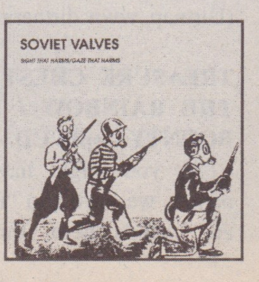
Rumbling and tumbling garage that lays its 50s rockabilly roots firmly down without surrendering any






ROCK THE LIGHT
the summer we all got laid


So I Had To Shoot Him


SOVIET VALVES
SIGHT THAT HARMS/GAZE THAT HARMS

of its 60s-inspired Hammond groove. A front man that carries the tunes like a greasier Glen Danzig, brought up in the steamy swamps of Baton Rogue rather than the suburban sprawl of New Jersey. Dirty and cheap and stinking of the sweat of a low budget weekend booze binge. If the MISFITS went garage whilst still keeping the ELVIS fixation. Great. (SD)
(Shake Your Ass. www.syareords.it)

THE THINGS – "Demon Stomp" EP

Accompanying PR states these lads are Big Neck's Horror Rock successors to the BLOWTOPS. Though the THINGS sound a bit more controlled, there's still plenty to like on these four tracks. Garage-y, though "Sick Street" gets into *Killed by Death* territory, and a bit CRAMPS-ish. The sometimes-nutty organ playing tends to be a highlight throughout. (DD)
(Big Neck, POB 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

TOMMY & THE TERRORS – "Unleash the Fury" CD

Once you get the past the appalling cover art (muscular chap in loincloth, with various dogs on leashes, and buxom wench clinging to his tree-trunk thigh, standing astride a battle scene which would appear to be urban skinheads fighting with "normal" folks), you're in for a musical treat. 15 speedy, aggressive, slices of anthemic punk. Raw yet poised, as if the COCKNEY REJECTS were doing an album of DILLINGER FOUR and early SWINGIN' UTTERS covers. Cover art aside, you can't really go wrong! (RK)
(TKO, www.tkorecords.com)

TOYS THAT KILL – "Don't Take My Clone / Breaking Out"

Okay, somehow my previous review for this lovely record never made it in, but let me say if you haven't picked it up by now you are a loser. In fact you should have every TOYS THAT KILL release because they are one of the best bands going today. Playing melodic punk that is edgy, yet loaded with hooks, it is a wonder to me why this band isn't huge. Of course, I think the MINUTEMEN should be huge too, so maybe people just hate San Pedro. Buy this record. (JF)
(Dirtnap, www.dirtnaprecs.com)

TREASURE CHEST AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW / MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY – split CD

As you might have guessed from the names, we have two "intense" and "passionate" bands here, this time from sunny Luxembourg. They each offer four songs of fairly complex, melodic emo, with MUTINY adding some flashes of quirky angularity to the mix. I imagine that both bands rouse stirring feelings in packed crowds of backpack-wearing kids throughout Western Europe. (AM)
(New Romance For Kids, www.newromanceforkids.com)

TIMES NEW VIKING – "Busy Making Love & War" EP

Dirgy, noisy indie-pop, but not in a bad way… urgent rhythms, buzzing, crackling guitar, and paranoid-sounding male and female vocals are punctuated by occasionally obtrusive keys. These recordings have apparently been "fucked with" by one Mike Rep of MIKE REP & THE QUOTAS and I'm not sure how much of their charm is due to his GBV-like aural tweakage. Still, a welcome diversion. The song "War," although the slower of the two, was my favorite, sounding like a death-disco incarnation of later WIRE. I like. (AM)
(Columbus Disco, no address)

TRADITION DIES HERE – "Time to Turn the Tables" CD

On their debut release TRADITION DIES HERE unleashes an interesting mix of hardcore, screamo, and a touch of crust. The guitar distortion hits heavy and hard, but the repetitive rhythms, song structure, and blown-out vocals remind me more of a modern hardcore/screamo style. There are a few fast straight-up hardcore songs, but they still incorporate cross-genre elements that break the monotony and allow the listener to remain engaged. Overall, this CD is pretty solid for a debut release. (RC)
($8 ppd: Tradition Dies Here, 6107 43rd Street, Riverdale, MD 20737)

UNDER PRESSURE – "Versus" CD

Wow, what a great CD! While I've heard other releases by Canada's UNDER PRESSURE, I don't remember ever liking them quite as much as I do on this, their debut full-length. Their vocalist has a gruff and bitter but still melodic delivery that is actually not too unlike the dude from FUCKED UP, and in fact UNDER PRESSURE's songs have the same sort of aggressive but still totally catchy, rocking vibe as said band This is hardcore for sure, but never really gets up to thrash speeds, which is just fine by me—it just gives the songs a chance to shine through that much more. Pretty much every song has an anthemic, fist-in-air quality—I can just picture the sweaty, crowded pit that this band should generate. I do wish that the vocals were just a bit louder in the mix, and I could do without the couple of extraneous guitar solos they throw in their, but overall this has me wishing I hadn't missed this band's show in the East Bay last week. Damn weeknight shows and me being a crotchety old West Bay dwelling fool! After a couple of listens, I have to say that this is possibly the best new CD-only release I've reviewed all year, though happily I think that vinyl is on it's way. Totally recommended! (GN)
(Primitive Air-Raid, Apartment 3 – 431 Stradbrook Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA)

UNHOLY GRAVE – "Cryptic Dirty Conformity" CD

You can always count on UNHOLY GRAVE to assault yer brain, and in this case they pull no punches, ripping out 14 ultra-fuckin'-raw tracks of unrelenting old-school grind recorded in Singapore on a four-track in early 2005. Do I really need to explain what UNHOLY GRAVE sounds like? I don't think so—if you are a fan of grind or hardcore and you haven't heard these guys, you must have been living with some sketchy cult on a compound in Felton. This CD kills. *Play fucking louder than hellish crossfire!* (NE)
(MCR Company, 157 Kimiagu, Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN)

UNHOLY GRAVE – "Never Repeat" EP

This 7" is an unreleased demo that was recorded in December of 2000, and from reading the liner notes it says that the ex-drummer of UNHOLY GRAVE was asked back into the band to record this demo. Not only did he drum, but he played everything on the recording except for the vocals—what a solid dude! So you say you've come to love UNHOLY GRAVE over the years for their raw as fuck recordings, brutal riffs, ripping drums and over the top vocals? Well you can expect not to be let down with this EP. This recording stands up to all their other releases in every way, not to mention they do a RIPCORD and HERESY medley to end the record. (NE)
(Haunted Hotel, PO Box 348, Yonkers, NY 10710)

VAGINA SORE JR. – "Strikes and Gutters" EP

In Florida I was in a van, and told "We have to see VAGINA SORE JR!" Sadly, I ignored this and went to go meet a friend instead. Well, after hearing this EP I can say I just blew it. VAGINA SORE JR. features members

of the TIM VERSION and CLAIRMEL, and sounds like it. What that means is, think Florida before the HOT WATER MUSIC invasion, to the days when poppier bands like RADON ruled the scene. Six manic, melodic blasts that have been replayed constantly on my turntable. I blew it once and may have to make a trip down to Tampa just to correct my mistake. (JF)
(ADD, www.addzine.com)

VALDEZ – "Exception Becomes the Rule" CD

Brit four-piece that turns in ten tracks of aggressive, mid-paced, rusty punk. Reminds me a lot of the glory days of '82, when the likes of the UNDERDOGS, CRIMINAL CLASS, and the FITS were putting out great singles. I suspect the band probably draws more on early CHAOS UK, but I like 'em. No lyrics printed, but they seem a cut above the usual. Some politics, only one song about drinking, and fighting only the enemy in the streets. (RK)
(www.valdez.org.uk)

VITAMIN X – "Rip It Out" EP

Damn, this is really good. It's hard to believe that I put on a show for these guys almost six years ago, and they are still very much alive and kicking, with this smoking EP to prove it. Uni-browed, cowboy hat-wearing, unadulterated Dutch thrashcore coming up your ass. (CC)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

WALKING WRECK – "Morphed Out" EP

Man, Fountain Valley, CA, sounds like a fucked up place, if you can judge from these guys' lyrics. Lame poser punks, phony botox ladies, religious zealots, and worst of all—drugged-out goths! WALKING WRECK is a perfect blend of old-school punk/thrash (circa 1980) and more modern, tough-guy hardcore. But unlike the latter, these guys seem to have a sense of humor ("Fallout Beach" is funny as hell) and they bust out the mid-fast tempo blasts without any distortion on the guitar (!), which gives this EP an entirely unique, and awesome, sound. Pick this motherfucker up; it's gotta be the best record of the month. (PC)
(XMike FitzgeraldX, 652 Evelyn Ave., East Meadow, NY 11554, xmikefitzgeraldx@gmail.com)

THE WEATHER MACHINES – "The Sound of Pseudoscience" CD

Power pop here that reminds me of L.A. circa 1980 by way of South Dakota when there was a glut of post-KNACK bands that were mostly forgettable quality-wise but not style-wise. This is decent with its catchy songs and a bit of jangly college rock mixed in, though it seems to be missing the obligatory hit or two to make this a real keeper. OK at best. (RL)
(Tigers Against Crime, www.tigersvscrime.com)

THE WORST – "Earache" EP

A rightfully shameless molestation of heavy art-damaged punk with all the spit and venom you'll need to peel off your skin and swim in your own urine. (BS)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

YOUNG CANADIANS – "No Escape" CD

Finally, this and the MODERNETTES CDs are back in print thanks to Sudden Death. Originally out in 1995 this wasn't around for long. This band—best known for "Let's Go to Fucking Hawaii"—has their two 1980 Quintessence Records releases included here as well as a K-TELS track and some live stuff. Essential for early West Coast punk enthusiasts. (RL)
(Sudden Death, www.suddendeath.com)

V/A – "Gulf Coast Massacre" LP

Hold on you fucking fucks! This is a truly superb cross-section of bad music for bad people! Represented are fifteen angry punk bands from the fine states of Texas, Louisiana, and Florida. Some stand-out tracks are SICK ABUSE's "Damage is Done," RUNNAMUCKS' "Inferno," KILLSWITCH's "Real Life," KNUCKLESCRAPPER's "No More," REASON OF INSANITY's "As Politicians Smile," DEROTZZ's "Goring El Matador," MURDER SUICIDE PACT's "I'm Not Cleaning Up This Mess," the PALLBEARERS' "Who's Laughing Now" and "Ripped to Shit," KRULLER's "Cardiac Arrest," and JANITOR's "No Control" and "Exterminate My Generation." This is nasty, dirty, punk rock music with balls!!! This is a fucking great compilation! (BR)
(Psychowolf)

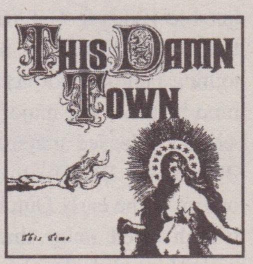
V/A – "Hardcore '83" LP

Hardcore '83 was the follow-up to the previous year's *Russia Bombs Finland* compilation, released by the quintessential early Finnish hardcore label Propaganda Records. Weighing in at 35 tracks (roughly a third of which clock in under 60 seconds), *Hardcore '83* boasts some of Finland's finest: RATTUS, RIISTETYT, TAMPERE SS, BASTARDS, HIC SYSTEEMI, DESTRUCKTIONS, PROTESTI, and a dozen more. The recording quality varies throughout, and with so much material, there are bound to be some throw-aways, but the record, once you get into it, is pretty damn solid. At its best, Finnish hardcore in the 80s was mindbendingly intense, raw, relentless, and catchy all at once. Anyone who's been keeping track of the wealth of old Scandinavian reissues in the last few years knows that Höhnie does an excellent job, and this latest one is no exception—the cover is a faithful reproduction of the classic original art, and the record comes with a 16-page booklet (all in Finnish). I can recommend this on the strength of the killer RATTUS and TAMPERE SS tracks alone. (CS)
(Höhnie, c/o Andreas Höhn, An Der Kuhtränke 7, 31535 Neustadt, GERMANY, www.hoehnierecords.de)

V/A – "Holland Hardcore Vol. 1" 2xLP

A fun, but maybe not one-sitting-listenable, limited edition (numbered to 1,000) double LP from a whopping six-LP set. Collecting six to nine tracks each from lo-fi

Syzslak
WHEN DEMONS RIDE ANGELS



THE THINGS
PSYCHO SOUND

Vagina Sore Jr

Vitamin X
RIP IT OUT

Walking Wreck
MORPHED OUT

original demos and raw tracks from nine different early 1980s Dutch hardcore and proto-thrash bands: SQUITS, VIKINGS, ZMIV, STANX, ZWEETKUTTEN, GLORIOUS DEATH, LÄRM, KNAX, LARESISTANCE. All largely single line thrashing, rudimentary 1-2-3 let 'er rip hardcore, driven overall by the primitive and speedy drumming. It's endearing in its practice space roughness, blown out with built in cassette hiss and the unpredictable 1980s feel of "figure it out and make it up as you go." By no means essential—nothing here has not heard before or not captured better in the major bands from the time period's released material (LARM, PANDEMONIUM, BGK)—this does capture the totality of the early Dutch hardcore scene with its high speed, noisy, thrash sound and its surprisingly solid development concurrent to those major bands. For the diehard 80s completist, total lo-fi thrash hound, or those who were fortunate enough to be there. (KS)

(Abuse, c/o Antonio Bovino, 711-713 Chaussee De Mons, 1070 Brussels, BELGIUM)

V/A – "Holland Hardcore 2nd Attack" 2xLP

This double album of early Dutch hardcore contains some recordings likely mastered on cardboard; most of this semi-seminal HC is obfuscated by distortion. The guy who mastered this inscribed "Never mind the quality" in the inside groove, so be prepared. FUNERAL ORATION shows early mastery of their trademark anthemic sound, here with added pummeling power. PANDEMONIUM modulates their wall of noise with staccato vocals and crashing percussion, though INDIREKT emerges from the melee emasculated, so to speak. Same for SESAMZAAD, though ASPERITY'S offers a more listenable thrashy HC—or am I just getting used to the wall of static? For completists. (SS)

(Abuse, c/o Antonio Bovino, 711-713 Chausse De Mons, 1070 Brussels, BELGIUM)

V/A – "Holland Hardcore 3: The Invasion" 2xLP

This is the final installment of a three-part double LP release of early Dutch punk demos on Belgium's Abuse Records. The other two installments of this release—and I've only seen it sold together as a big, $50 set—are also reviewed in this issue, and this double LP shares both the triumphs and pitfalls of the other two. First of all, this is a lot of music to digest in one sitting—I had to put this record away and come back to it a couple of times to get through everything—and the sound quality is most definitely not the best. The quality varies from band to band on this record (which is actually not strictly a double LP, but rather an LP and a half, as the second record is only one-sided), and the bands featured on this volume are not the big hitters of Dutch hardcore (some of which—like LARM and PANDEMONIUM are on the other two volumes of this set) but rather a bunch of bands I have never heard of before (GEPOPEL, PUINHOOP, LAITZ, MOG, CHLORIX, ECHTE BOTER GVD, OIGASM, or A.RELAXT anyone?). Still, this is a fun and interesting look at a one of the unsung scenes of the early 80s European hardcore world, and I have to say that the sound on at least some of this seems a bit better than on the other two. There are some crazy distorted thrash bands on this comp—a lot of which will likely appeal to international noisecore enthusiasts—but for me the standout band was the first, GEPOPEL, whose sound was more melodic and quite memorable. I would have a hard time recommending this to anyone other than European hardcore completists or Dutch punk fanatics, but this is a cool historical look at vibrant punk scene nonetheless. I do want to say, however, that I wish that the label had included any information at all with these records, and that a bit more time had been put into making the art on release look a bit nicer. (GN)

(Abuse, c/o Antonio Bovino, 711-713 Chausse De Mons, 1070 Brussels, BELGIUM)

V/A – "Life. Love. Hardcore. A Moo Cow Records Compilation"

A varied, ten-band, 24-song collection of tracks from the MOO COW label's various vinyl-only 7"s, full-length releases, as well as an unreleased session from 7 YEARS WAR. One to nine tracks each from bands based all over the US of metallic, downbeat, moshumental hardcore (DIVE, DISEMBODIED, CHILMARK), inventive and progressive hardcore (7 YEARS WAR), RORSCHACH-ish harshness (CABLE, CANEPHORA), wild, throttling, goof thrash (the ULTIMATE WARRIORS), straight up thrash (INTENT TO INJURE), and a great, oddball AmRep/Guzzard style rocker from SONG OF KERMAN. A nice, varied, and solid sampler, an odd choice of Frances Bacon artwork, and twelve-page booklet with lyrics. (KS)

(Moo Cow, 38 Larch Circle, Belmont, MA 02478, www.moocowrecords.com)

V/A – "Nut Boppin, Whoppers!" CD

A cool collection from this Brit label of garage, garage pop, punk, and pop. Exclusive tracks mixed in with catalog stuff. Included are the UNLOVABLES, the REAL LOSERS, the NASTIES, BOONARAAS, the STUCK UPS, and SAVAGE LUCY, to name a few. This comp is very heavy on female vocals and features 27 tracks that will keep the party boppin' for sure. (RL)

(Squirrel, www.squirrelrecords.co.uk)

V/A – "Our Small Tribute to Blondie" CD

A handful of young hopefuls hitch their wagons to a waning star: will Deborah Harry and the surviving members of BLONDIE be amused, flattered, or moved? Will they know it's Christmastime at all? Can't I hear these tunes on the jukebox at Louis & BeBe's Silver Spur? SHARK SOUP, SILENT MEOW, GENEPOOL, ROTTEN APPLES, DIE TORNADOS, THEE FLANDRES, POPZILLAS, STIFF-O-MATIC FINGERDOGS, SKEPTIC ELEPTIC, WET YOUR WHISTLE, CUT MY SKIN, the PEERS, the GUV'NORS, VIRAGE DANGEREUX, BLONDIED, K-MOB, and RAGAZZA all turn in color-by-numbers readings of "Dreaming," "Fade Away and Radiate," "Denis" (itself a cover), "Sunday Girl," "Hanging on the Telephone" (itself another cover), etc. *Our Small Tribute to Blondie* is as gratuitous an effort as all tribute compilations: please, allow this trend to *expire.* (JH)

(Trash 2001, PO Box 101653, 46216 Bottrop, GERMANY, www.trash2001.de)

V/A – "Portland City Hard Punk" LP

All right folks, here is an all Portland compilation that highlights a few of the top bands from that area. DOG SOLDIER and ASSASSINATE get down and dirty with a distortion-powered crust assault. LEBENDEN TOTEN plays some insanely blown out thrashy punk. If you dig lots of lo-fi feedback and a guitar that sounds like a screaming power drill then this will certainly be a hit. HELLSHOCK closes things out with their own version of dark and doomy crust. Harsh, throaty vocals and shredding metallic guitar riffs should have you headbanging in no time. All the bands here are great, and there is not one bad song on this compilation. It should be noted that the LP cover is well-done and folds out into a huge poster, and that this release is limited to a one-time pressing of 1000 copies. So buy now or regret it later. (RC)

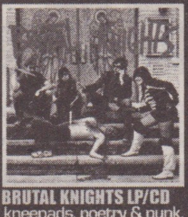
(Hardcore Holocaust, PO Box 143403, Austin, TX 78714-3403, www.hcholocaust.com)

DERANGED

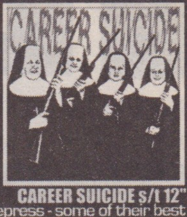
LEFT FOR DEAD

LEFT FOR DEAD live 12"
pro recording from reunion show May 2004

TEEN CRUD COMBO s/t LP
long lost album by one of Canada's best- ACE

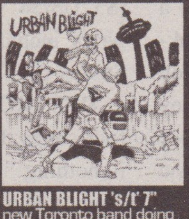


BRUTAL KNIGHTS LP/CD
kneepads, poetry & punk, who knew? this one rips

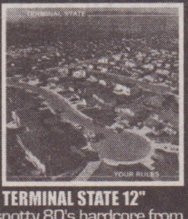

CAREER SUICIDE

CAREER SUICIDE s/t 12"
repress - some of their best now with a bonus track

HAMMER 'blue' 12"
killer japanese HC, by far their best record to date


URBAN BLIGHT

URBAN BLIGHT 's/t' 7"
new Toronto band doing straight forward HC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YOUR RULES

TERMINAL STATE 12"
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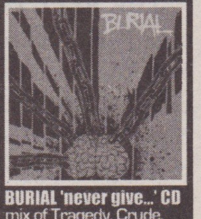
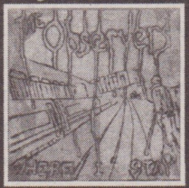
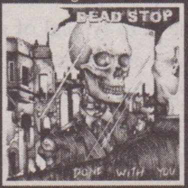


BURIAL 'never give...' CD
mix of Tragedy, Crude, Selfish & DeathSide

FUCKED UP 'epics' CD
best band in HC? comp. of 7"s, demo, and rarities.



OBSERVERS 'where I stay' 7"
newest recording, their 3rd 7" - new CD out in early 06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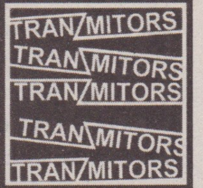
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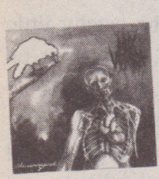

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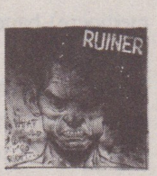

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland, OR 97207. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Ariel Awesome, and Erin Yanke.

THE BELL COUNTY SILENCE has a demo, which contains a decided lack of punkness. They sound like an even wussier version of BRAID or JIMMY EAT WORLD. They play slow to mid-tempo pop songs with those pleading sort of vocals that give you music that people are calling emo these days. The songs have some complexity in the guitar work but otherwise they are typical of a style that was dated five years ago. (4 song CD, no lyrics, heyy_duder@yahoo.com) (Pete)

CLOAK DAGGER remembers to put the rock in punk rock, and also remembers that hatred and grudges are as important to punk rock as a few chords, a driving rhythm section, and a singer who is actually expressing something! Yep, I like this a lot. Mid-tempo, solid, early 80s Southern California type punk, but not retro—real punk rock. ($3 ppd. 5 song CD, lyrics included. 3526 Grove Ave. #1, Richmond, VA 23221.) (Erin)

C.O.B.R.A. THE ENEMY plays faster, meaner thrash than the 80s influenced kind that I think of as "traditional thrash" (what funny ways we describe things in these modern times!). They've got a grind undercurrent to them, & the thrashing provides the structure for the mayhem. Vocals are guttural screaming, keeping up with the pace. Exciting, and solid. (4 song CD, lyrics included.) (Erin)

CUSTOMERS play catchy punk rock that is sometimes jangly and sometimes harsh. It starts off as mid-tempo, then moves into the fast songs, but remains absolutely danceable, even with the sharp changes. There are glimpses of familiarity—like the moments when they sound just like early SOCIAL UNREST—but I can't put a finger on it for very long. This is simply a great punk rock demo. ($3 or 3 euro ppd. 8 song Cassette, lyrics included. BPN 07, 78110 Levesinet Cedex, France.) (Erin)

DEAD RADICAL plays hardcore punk rock-style (almost no metal influences here!) thrash, and does it well, with a screaming vocalist scrambling to keep up with the pace. ($3 US/$4 world, ppd. 8 song cassette, no lyrics included. Not Very Nice Tapes, 5726 Sussex Ct, Troy, MI 48098.) (Erin)

DESTROY THE ORCS blows through four songs that only disappoint because there is nothing "fantasy" about them (you would think with a name like that...). They play fast and heavy thrash songs, two of which don't even make the one minute mark. They quickly run through power chords and blast beats and just when you think the song will fall apart they pull through with a driving mosh part. The vocalist has a fairly high-pitched screaming voice that works well with the music. Although the songs are fairly typical of the style the band has a ton of energy and the drummer comes up with some great rhythm parts in the breakdowns that make the songs stand out. (4 song CD, with lyrics, 5120 Gander Rd. W, Dayton, OH 45424, www.destroytheorcs.cjb.net) (Pete)

DISSCIORDA doesn't surprise anyone by playing your standard D-beat hardcore that has been done and done and done. Most displeasing was the weird aggressive naked woman as their centerfold. Why sexualized demon females still have any currency in punk art is a fucking mystery to me. Whatever, if you think that Dis sound can never get tired, and that it's overreacting to be offended by naked demon woman centerfolds—then by all means, go for it. (10 song CD, lyrics included. dissciorda@yahoo.it) (Ariel)

DUCKBOMB has a demo with a large number of sloppy hardcore tunes, played at full speed. I tend to love the sloppy punk but these guys get to the point where there are a couple songs in which the guitar and drums are so off that it is hard to listen to. The guitars are supper fuzzy and move through power chords pretty fast. The drums go as fast as they can almost all the time and tend to get pretty messy. The vocalist on the other hand has a great screaming voice that is abrasive, harsh, & full of energy. (15 song CD, with lyrics, PO Box 241, Orland Pk, IL 60462, bloodmoneydistro@yahoo.com) (Pete)

FENS plays a sort of dancey disco beat punk fronted by angry robots, who may or may not follow politics. It's like that northwest hardcore band turned art rock sound, Gravity Records kind of stuff. The sound is well defined, but a little predictable after a while. If pressed for a comparison, PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES comes to mind. (5 song CD, no lyrics included. www.myspace.com/thefens) (Ariel)

FORCED MARCH calls themselves thrashcore, and for the most part I would agree. Sometimes, though, they play way faster than that, moving into the grind world, and with grind vocals to match. They also have moody and slower moments, but we like it when bands mix it up. (6 song CD, lyrics included. 125 NW 20th Pl, Portland, OR 97209.) (Erin)

HIKER BIKER has a CD of discordant, complicated, pop songs. The first six songs mix slow to mid tempo, meandering, A MINOR FOREST style of emo with messy, CORDUROY style pop. The songs are catchy without being predictable or boring. The layered guitar work is fairly intricate but they don't seem to be afraid of rocking out every once in a while. The only thing that brings the songs down are the monotone vocals which are sung with very little feeling. The last three songs are slower tunes, which lack drums, and they tend to drag. Altogether, the CD is worth checking out, especially for the catchy little instrumental track. (9 song CD, with lyrics, 68 Arnold Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94110, antidogmatist@gmail.com) (Pete)

I HATE COPS is a comp of some good (and mediocre) bands that vehemently despise the police. As we all should! Highlights are the bands BLASTMAT, who are a brutal charging street punk band, and VIVISUCK, who although are terribly recorded are clearly a competent crust band. The sweet "I Hate Cops" patch really made this comp rad, but I think I could have done without all the lengthy movie samples. There needs to be more outright cop hating like this. Seriously. (10 song CD, lyrics included. 2421 W. Jefferson St. PHX, AZ 85009. punkbastardmail@yahoo.com) (Ariel)

JACUZZI SUICIDE plays lo-fi rockaroll, that bridges the gap between the stoners on the porch playing the same complicated riffs for hours, and the sloppy drunken punk bands that are slowly but surely getting better at playing their instruments. They manage to incorporate things like guitar solos and falsetto singing onto a well-laid bed of chaos and too much classic rock van listening. Still punk, though, somehow. And, they explain mysteries. Thanks! ($3 ppd. 8 song CD, lyrics included. Mulberry St., Woodfin, NC 28804.) (Erin)

JFD (which stands for JODIE FOSTERS DISCHARGE) is a drum and guitar combo I'm pretty sure. They play around with the darker sides of hardcore that sound more deeply angry. Their pace varies, their mosh parts in the grind songs aren't that slow, and the fast parts with the thrash aren't blazing. Their guitar is very metal in tone, and th drummer loves cymbals! The vocals are sometimes sinister, and sometimes on the attack. ($1 ppd. 14 song CD, no lyrics included. 4911 Bellmont, Dallas, TX 75206.) (Erin)

JUTRO moves fast and crazy. They sound rabid and hardcore, and awesome! They play fast, and have guitar solos and song structure as if hard rock was what crossed over into punk. The vocals have some kind of effects on them that make them blend really well with the music, and act as more texture than something separate. This is killer. (4 song Cassette, lyrics included. 1333 Pennsylvania Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90033. Jutrobeats@yahoo.com) (Erin)

RIOT COP plays music like THE DEAD KENNEDY'S, surf-influenced, totally political ("bye-bye GI in Iraq you're gonna die") and sharp lyrics based on real experiences that happen to these badass street fighters. Melodic and catchy songs, sung and sometimes shouted yelling, and a couple pure surf instrumentals in here, too. Totally great, especially in these "short on anthem" times. ($4 ppd. 17 song CD, no lyrics included. 3203 SE Woodstock Blvd., Box 1282, Portland, OR 97202) (Erin)

SAILOR WINTERS has a CD with nine tracks of electronic noise and distortion. It sounds like some of it is done on organ while there is also some distant sounding vocals and maybe some heavily distorted and screwed around with bass (not totally sure though). Maybe I just don't get it but it sounds like random noise to me. I could see it working as a soundtrack to a spooky movie. (9 song CD, no lyrics, sailorwinters84@hotmail.com) (Pete)

SHINKY plays fairly catchy pop/emo songs. Their sound is something like SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE with more of a poppy, JIMMY EAT WORLD feel. The songs don't really add any thing new to the genre but they are pretty catchy and tend to be more driving than what you might expect. The recording is good and the songs are played well so if you like the above mentioned bands then this could be worth looking into. (7 song CD, no lyrics, shinky3@hotmail.com) (Pete)

SPOONFUL OF VICODIN is a grindcore two piece, alternating slow and fast pacing, male and female vocals, and totally metal moments with the darkest of punk moments. ($3 US/$4 world, ppd. 18 songs and an interview on this cassette, with lyrics included. Not Very Nice Tapes, 5726 Sussex Ct., Troy, MI 48098.) (Erin)

SOTATILA is yet another band indebted to DISCHARGE for their primary sound, but they break out of the formula, they're kind of more snotty and playful than D-beat normally allows itself to be. I don't know if their politics were lost in translation somehow, but it's clear they are Anarchists who hate war and people who "just think about their own asses." Pretty good. (9 song CD, lyrics included. www.sotatila.cjb.net) (Ariel)

SELFISH and **FORCA MACABRA** have a split tape, featuring live sets in North America. SELFISH performed in Philadelphia, and live on WFMU. Usually, SELFISH sounds like thrashy and sometimes crusty ragin' hardcore, but the live stuff is dominated by the vocals, and hard to get swept up in the music. The WFMU stuff is awesome, clearer, more balanced, and the bonus of talking between the songs. FORCÃ MACABRA plays super fast thrash metal, and played it in Toronto for this live performance. Again, it's hard to get good sound, and in this case the guitars get buried between the vocals and the insane drumming. This side is also quieter, especially after the WFMU performance. ($3 US/$4 world, ppd. 28 song cassette, no lyrics included. Not Very Nice Tapes, 5726 Sussex Ct, Troy, MI 48098.) (Erin)

THE SYPHILITES plays good ol' lo-fi punk rock. It's regular-fast, with just a few chords, and an angry vocalist who's ranting most of the time. The instrument levels on the tape vary, but they did mention recording this with one mic hanging from the garage ceiling. Lots of heart, these folks have. They also smash up "Folsom Prison Blues" and "Borstal Breakout," and it's pretty great! ($1.50 ppd. 7 song CD, no lyrics included. 715 Elm St, Woodland, CA 95695.) (Erin)

TUNDRA put out a demo with confusing packaging, so I don't know if it's two songs by them and two songs by their previous band GODS AMONG MEN (who lost the bass player, not literally), or if all four of the songs are by TUNDRA. I can't figure it out, my apologies. But, on to the music! The songs are slow and dark, very gothic, and very soundtrack-ish. They are deep and dense, with periods of swelling cacophony. The viola is very much the present and leading instrument, with some moody and slow crust filling out the sound. Vocals are screaming, and sparse compared to the instrumentation. (4 song CD, lyrics included. 4009 16th Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98106.) (Erin)

WASTED TIME plays some traditional, no-nonsense thrash hardcore, complete with rippin'-it-up guitar parts, and a vocalist who keeps up by ranting and speaking, and occasionally yelling this shit out! Nothing groundbreaking or revolutionary here, but do you want that messing up your thrash? Doubt it. (4 song CD, lyrics included. 116 S. Boulevard Apt. C, Richmond VA 23220.) (Erin)

WASTED TIME is fucking awesome. While I was playing this in the Gilman Stoar, everyone was asking about it. The comments I heard were "man, sounds like DEADFALL but with deeper vocals" and "sounds like a sped up NEGATIVE APPROACH." Not so sure about the NEGATIVE APPROACH comparison, but they do fucking rip. Good driving rhythm, solid riffs, and a punk as fuck attitude. That's what I like to hear. (4 song CD, lyrics included. wastedtimesucks@yahoo.com) (Ariel)

THE WRISTS are synthesizer driven punk with a catchy rhythm section providing the depth. The vocals are the most prominent thing of all, and cover up some of the art punk intricacies I think I hear the rhythm section engaging in. It's totally dance worthy, and they cover a URINALS song, too. ($3 US/$4 world, ppd. 8 song cassette, no lyrics included. Not Very Nice Tapes, 5726 Sussex Ct., Troy, MI 48098.) (Erin)

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31 song ballistic ADD assault
APARTMENT 213 - 1993-97 CD
90s raw Clevo power violence
BREAKFAST 2nd LP
Round 2 of manic Tokyo Skate thrash
INSECT WARFARE - Debut EP
Mega-ultra-blast ala early EARACHE
MINDLESS MUTANT - Debut EP
Chino area full throttle fastcore
NO DICE - One Sided Lmted EP
Brand new insane Bay Area speedcore
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS - Coll CD
Manic Texas HC from late 90s
ROSENBOMBS - Debut EP
Bay Area SIEGE style ultra-core
SECOND OPINION - EP/CD
High energy HMB thrashcore
CALL THE COPS - Debut EP
AZ thrash ala STRAIGHT AHEAD
KUNGFU RICK - 2xCD
Entire collection. Insane grind/HC
BARBARIC THRASH CD COMP SERIES
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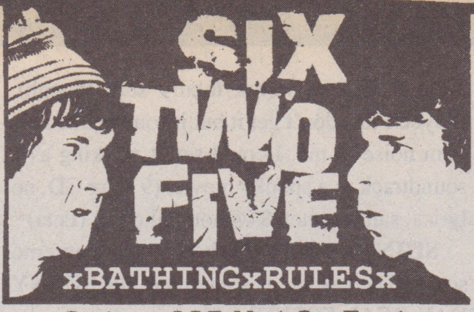
HIT ME BACK - Debut LP
Socal ultra-posi thrash kings
L'AMICO DI MARTUCCI/OHUZARU-CD
Collection of dual fast Italian HC
HATRED SURGE - Debut EP
One-person fastcore a la Despise YOU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I SHOT CYRUS - Titanus LP/CD
Pulverizing Brazilian fast attack
I DON'T CARE/QUILL - split CD
Split Tokyo high-speed assault
BLOODY PHOENIX - Debut EP
Ex-Excruc Terror grinding blastcore
MACHINE GUN ROMANTICS - CD
Collect. of manic US powerviolence
LORDS OF LIGHT - EP
Wicked 3-man grind/fastcore, ex-SOF
CHARM - Shikami EP
Crazed Tokyo distort hyper thrash.
IRON LUNG - Debut LP/CD
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THEY LIVE - LP
Scorching fast NY power violence
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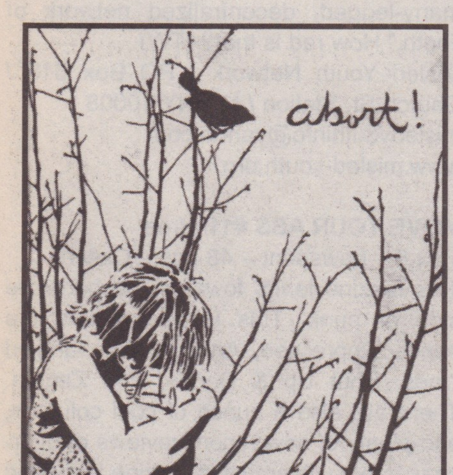
ZINES

Reviews by: (AR) Aragorn, (HB) Heather Blotto, (PC) Paul Curran, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (BD) Ben Ditch, (LG) Layla Gibbon, (CH) Cassie Harwood, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (JM) Jeff Mason, (GN) Golnar Nikpour, (CR) Casey Ress, (AS) Andy Shoup, (DS) Dionne Stevens, (TW) Thera Webb.

Please send your zine in for review to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and postpaid price. If you want us to include a foreign postpaid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ABORT! #18 / $3
5.5 x 8 – copied – 92 pgs

This installment doesn't feature much writing from the editor, Jonathan. Instead, it's a compilation of local (NYC) writers. There are no interviews, ads, or reviews, and there is artwork by Christie Road and Joey Alone. Plus *if you act now* you can maybe get a copy with a silk-screened cover. Jonathan limits his written contributions to introductions and explanatory footnotes, and this stuff was some of the best writing in here. The extended tale of the advice booth was pretty great as well. But you know how it is with compilations…There's a reason they don't enjoy the best reputation. Also included are more art and comics, some fiction—some of it ridiculous on purpose and some the story of being a bum, a recounting of struggles with impotence, the guy from Leftover Crack saying their fans aren't really so bad, and some other stuff I could've safely skipped. If a friend of mine contributed, I would get it, but otherwise three bucks is a little more than I would pay. (JM)
45 E7th St. #106 / New York, NY 10003



AGITATE #6 / $2 or trade
5.75 x 8.25 – copied – 20 pgs

Short but sweet anarcho zine with lots of music reviews, plus interviews with Ruin, Extinction Of Mankind, and information on local activist groups. Good effort, but could benefit from a little more of a personal feel. (MD)
PO Box 202 / Shipley / BD18 3WB / United Kingdom

THE ALARM #3 / 2 stamps
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs

This is more of a directory of local political happenings than a zine per se, although there is one interview with an activist from New Orleans on the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. There are multiple listings of activist groups in the Houston area. (MD)
PO Box 66362 / Houston, TX 77266

BIG HANDS #1 / two stamps or trade
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 28 pgs

Ahh…angst and cynicism, the hallmark of any decent personal-type zine. *Big Hands* presents some great stories on urban decay, hipster fucks, bad weather, gentrification, and getting drunk. While definitely a part of the overdone sub-genre, this one stands out as actually being original, well written, and readable. Your afternoon will be brighter if you receive this in the mail, and for two stamps or trade, why not. (CE)
Aaron / 1104 Imperial RD / Cary, NC 211511

THE DAILY COMPULSION #3 / $1
8.25 x 5.5 – copied – 16 pgs

There's not a lot to say about a comic zine like this. The art isn't all that great; the stories are overly self-referential and not terribly interesting. The layout is clean and there aren't any offensive jokes or drawings, but that's about all I can say in favor of this. Sorry. (CR)
N. Rice / PO Box 292 / Portland, ME 04112

FLYING LESSON #10 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 36 pgs

A perzine straight outta Bloomington, IN with a melancholic feel. Most of the focus is on love, from the exciting yet painful feel of first crushes to the painful non-exciting awkwardness of a small town breakup. She writes eloquently about the fragmentary nature of family life, the intuitive bonds and the alienation and misunderstandings, about small town life, cute girls and cruel girls, the power of good coffee…I liked how she wrote about the processes of writing music…
Ali Haimson / PO Box 954 / Bloomington, IN 47402

HELLFIRE FOR FUCKER #3 / free or $1 donation
8.5 x 11 – copied – 12 pgs

This is the second time I've reviewed *Hellfire for Fucker* by Floridian thrasher Evan, and just like last time I totally enjoyed this exuberant hardcore fanzine full of crazy cut'n'paste layout and breathless prose about the loudest and most distorted of DIY hardcore. There is a section reviewing some insane sounding Japanese noisecore by such obscure acts as the Donkeys, Dust Noise, and Gess in which Evan jokes that he needs to learn more synonyms for describing fucked up noise. There are also record reviews of some recent punk and metal releases alongside interviews with Finnish thrashers Força Macabra and Impaled Nazarene. There is also an interesting editorial about the endless use of fucked up pictures of war and brutality on the cover of punk records, and the aestheticization of pain in our scene. A well-done zine indeed, and well worth the buck to cover postage for sure. More DIY hardcore zines, please! (GN)

13137 N. 20th St #202 / Tampa, FL 33612

INSURGENT #17.1 / Free for prisoners, $15 for subscription

12 x15 – printed – 27 pgs

This is a free collective newspaper out of Eugene OR. I didn't really find anything that inspiring within its pages but maybe you will. The articles felt like they were all copied from the "official alternative lifestyle handbook" with features on useful herbs, why Bush is a bad thing and fucking Burning Man. It is, however, free, and if you are a prisoner you can get a free subscription. Slightly to the left of moveon.org if that floats yr boat. (LG)

(EMU Suite 1, University of Oregon, Eugene OR 97403-1228)

INTROVERT #4 / $1 & 2 stamps

8.5 x 5.5 – Copied – 20 pgs

This is a "personal zine" from Richmond, VA, which apparently has been on hiatus for six years. I am not a big fan of "perzines," but I generally judge them when I must by the quality of writing and thoughtfulness that goes into it. Since the majority of this genre in my opinion is pretty much self indulgent crap that is trying too hard to be *Cometbus*, it is rare that I can actually say one is decent and is not like that. *Introvert* is one that does not fit in with that majority. It is heartfelt, thoughtful, and well-written and coming from me that's about as big a complement as I can give a zine of this type. (NM)

Nichole Introvert / PO BOX 14607 / Richmond, VA / 23221

Nichole.introvert@gmail.com

A Journal of Ethical Anarchism

THE MATCH!

Our philosophy and practice: Criticism of, and resistance to, all statist laws and authoritarianism. We believe that governments and religions rest on threats or outright violence, and do more harm than good.

ISSUE No. 103

FALL, 2005

PUBLISHED SINCE 1969

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THE MATCH #103 / free or donation

7 x 9.5 – printed – 80 pgs

As a self-professed Luddite and anarchist, Fred Woodworth has more to pontificate about today than ever—and that he does. And while it may appear, upon skimming through page after page of articles, commentary, blurbs, reviews, and letters railing against statism, religion, and authoritarianism in all its myriad forms and guises—and against other folks that fancy themselves "anarchists" as well—that Fred is just a bitter old man with many an axe to grind, one would be hard-pressed to find much to disagree with in *The Match*. Fred is articulate and no-holds-barred, and his forte is pointing out the shit in the world that's so infuriating, or scary, that we really would rather not be sitting around pondering its implications, lest we become, well, cranky old men living in the desert without a computer, bank account, telephone, or—god forbid—a Safeway Club card. Thank you for being you, Fred. I'll be sending you a donation shortly (unmarked cash, of course) and will be a loyal reader for as long as you are publishing your beautiful home-pressed rag. (PC)

(Fred Woodworth, PO Box 3012, Tucson, AZ 85702)

MISLED YOUTH #1 / postage donation

8.5 x 7 – copied – 48 pgs

Youth activism is probably one of the most inspiring things going on these days, and if you don't think so, then this zine is totally your wakeup call. The Misled Youth Network is a group that "combines elements of the youth liberation, anti-prison, and mental health rights movements to address the problems that arise when we allow a for-profit industry to have control over our future." Sweet. And it was started by a couple of 18-year olds, with no funding or support. DIY!. This zine provides a glimpse of their upcoming book *Teenage Lobotomy*, with personal stories about teen detention centers, news clippings, advice for parents/guardians, amazing artwork, and ideas about how to change this fucked up system we live in. If you or anybody you know is attached to somebody "school age," or is a youth themselves, or has any interest in making social change, you should absolutely get this zine. And then go buy the book when it comes out. I know I will. P.S. They're also setting up a webpage that "functions as a sprawling, many-legged, decentralized network of youth." How rad is that? (TW)

Misled Youth Network / PO Box 515 / Church St. Station / NY, NY 10008

misledyouthinfo@yahoo.com

www.misled-youth.org

MOVE YOUR ASS #11 / free

11 x 8 – newsprint – 48 pgs – Czech

This fanzine leans towards the hardcore side of punk. This issue features the bands Oppressed, Against Me, Tangled Lines, Shut Up & Dance, and Zegota. There are also a bunch of cool columns, and plenty of new record reviews of overseas bands. Overall this fanzine is a good read, especially for anyone interested in the Czech scene. (HH)

Jan Kovar / PO Box 18 / Chrastava 463 31 / Czech Republic

www.moveyourass@seznam.cz

ONE SHOE IN THE ROAD: STRUCK CYCLISTS AND THEIR STORIES / $5

audio zine – pro-printed CD

I made sure to listen to this audio zine (on pro-printed CD with beautiful printed art) when no one else was at home. I poured myself a cup of tea, curled up on my couch, and popped it in. I was nervous for sure—listening to a full hour of stories by bicyclists who had been in life-threatening

bike accidents seemed like it could be quite difficult. I ride my bicycle almost everywhere I go, and have been doing so for practically as long as I can remember. As a long time city dweller, I never even bothered learning how to drive, and have spent untold hours and probably 1000s of miles riding the streets of New York City and now San Francisco. I have to warn potential listeners: this CD has some very graphic descriptions of getting struck by cars, and the pain and suffering (both emotional and physical) the interviewees underwent both during their accidents and in the aftermath thereof. Each interviewee provides such powerful descriptions that the listener would have to be stone-hearted not to empathize. During the course of the hour, I had to turn the CD off to take short breaks no fewer than three times, and the deeply moving stories I heard reduced me to tears as many times. I am not going to try to describe the stories in this zine—I really can't do the voices or experiences of each survivor justice—but I will say that each interviewee displayed a profound amount of wit, articulation, and above all bravery in telling their story. What's more, the editing of the stories together masterfully created linearity to the disparate narratives, which came out to be remarkably three-dimensional. Perhaps most impressively, rather than dissuade the listener from getting back on their bicycle, this zine pays touching tribute to the power of riding; it is a genuinely inspiring listen. I was nearly overwhelmed as a number of the interviewees described the triumphant moment when they could finally get back on their bikes, some after months of difficult recuperation. I was pretty wiped by the end of my listen. There was no way I was going to be able to read the other zines I had for review. Instead, I grabbed my jacket (and my helmet!) and jumped on my bike. I felt as vulnerable as I ever had before on my bike, but also, perhaps stronger than ever. (GN)
PO Box 52096 / New Orleans, LA / 70152

ONE WAY
TICKET #4

ONE WAY TICKET #4 / $2
4.25 x 5 – copied – 52 pgs
An excellent little personal zine. Stories and rants that are thoughtful and get you thinking about life in general. The topic matter is as generic as it gets—bike riding, traveling, dumpster diving, punk houses, and writing about writing a fanzine—but Julian realizes that it's not what you're doing, but the philosophy and meaning behind what we do in everyday life that matters. So many zines aspire to be like this but so very few can actually pull it off, so I'm giving big fat props to Julian, and hoping that he continues to produce and grow as a writer. (PC)
Julian Evan / CP 55018 / Montreal, QC H3G 2W5 / Canada

OX #62 / $7
11 x 8 – printed – 144 pgs – German
Whoa dude! It is as always a jam-packed fanzine with everything under the punk rock sun except the vegan kitchen sink. This issue features lots of band interviews, including NoMeansNo, plus pages and pages of record reviews and ads. There are columns, and of course a free twenty-seven song CD sampler. But what makes this issue special is the interview with the clothing outfit Punk Wears, and the philosophy about making and selling clothes to punks. First I must state that my own experience tells me Europeans in general are a bit more fashion conscious than us Americans, especially us Californians who pride ourselves on the clothes we find in free boxes. In this interview those who make and sell punk clothes say that lots of bands make more money off their T-shirts than their records, and that selling punk clothes is about selling an alternative fashion. We should remember that the punks of '77 were into fashion. I mean, didn't Malcolm McLaren the manager of the Sex Pistols—the one who brought punk to England from New York—own a clothing boutique, that became popular because of it's bondage gear? Anyway, this fanzine as always offers more punk rock than anyone could possibly digest in a month. Still, it is a worthwhile read. (HH)
PO Box 102225 / 42766 Haan / Germany
www.ox-fanzine.de

POOR AND FORGOTTEN #23 / $1, stamps, or trade
11 x 17 – copied – 2 pgs
Props to any motherfucker who does their zine in the hole (solitary confinement, in prison)! On the weight of those punk points, this is pretty great. The layout's good as well, and there's a comic and a Minor Threat word search. Stuff to read is pretty much limited to an interview with Harvard Square's Papercut Zine Library and a story, possibly apocryphal, of an ill-advised jailhouse tattoo. This is a quick read, and my opinion is colored by the circumstances in which it was produced, so if you don't share my biases you won't think it's as great as I do. (JM)
PO Box 59 / Linwood, MA 01525-0059

THE PUNK PAGAN #2 / "Free! (to anyone worldwide)"
5.5 x 8 – copied – 40 pgs
It was hard for me to appreciate much of this, 'cuz I'm an atheist (as the editor acknowledges "most punks" are). Unlike the editor, I do not "believe that everybody needs some sort of spirituality in their lives." So when there are pages devoted to who says what at the Samhain ritual, or what herbs to gather "to raise a wind," etc., I am dismissive. But hey, if you

SLINGSHOT
Free
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Issue #88
Fall 2005

wanna learn about paganism, witchery, etc., the price is certainly right. Also included are some rants on the Middle East (pretty informed, but I don't share his analysis), and a kind of touching one dealing with what he's recently learned about his birth mother and family, and how his upbringing contributed to his drug addiction, bad decisions, love of punk, etc. This zine was produced in prison, and 80% of the graphics are skulls. (JM)
PO Box 282 / Manville, RI 02838

RATCHARGE #4 / PERSPECTIVE #3 / $3

8 x 6 – copied – 48 pgs – French-English
OK, I must admit I am not a big fan of two fanzines sharing the same issue, especially if it is all held together with a rubber band. Still I know these people are cool so I will not give the fanzine a bad review. One side of this issue is in English featuring the bands I Object, Hit Me Back, and Hannibal Smith Army. There are also a bunch of record reviews and a couple of columns. The French side of this issue focuses more on asking the question, what is punk? Hey, is *MRR* really the punk bible? The drawings of the skulls were kind of cool, and of course the record reviews were enjoyable. Not bad, though I have seen more interesting fanzines. (HH)
Alex Simon / 57 Av. Du General Morand / 91600 Savigny / Orge / France
www.ratcharge@yahoo.fr

RAUMSCHIFF WUCHERPREIS! #17 / $3

11 x 8 – printed – 60 pgs – German
As usual this hardcore punk fanzine is mostly record reviews and a catalogue. There are two band interviews, Springtoifel, and Blanc Estoc. But mostly it is record reviews and a place to buy lots of cool punk rock. Don't be shy, check it out! (HH)
Schmitz / Postfach 100709 / 46527 Dinslaken / Germany
www.scumfuck.de

RAZORCAKE #29 / $4

8.5 x 11 – printed – 116 pgs
Like any big music mag, there's going to be stuff you love (great interviews and history of the Gun Club) and stuff you hate (Rev Norb—why?!?). Overall, this was much more love than hate, with lots of columns, interviews (Alicja Trout, The Checkers, David Cross), staff top fives, plus tons of ads and reviews (books, zines, and lots of music). (MD)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042

ROCK HARDI #34 / $8

8 x 6 – printed – 64 pgs – French
This is one of those really cool fanzines that give one insight into an unfamiliar scene. But because I recently spent some time in France I do not find all this fanzine covers so foreign, in fact the opposite. This issue has interviews and articles on the bands Little Green Fairy, Berurier Noir, Parabellum, Julien Sole, Schlingo, and Electric Frankenstein. There are also plenty of record reviews, some ads, plus a cool comic. Finally, this issue also comes with a fifteen-song CD featuring some of the interviewed bands. If you are into the French scene this fanzine is a must! (HH)
3 Rue Beausoliel / 63100 Clermont-Ferrand / France
www.rockhardi.com

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TO GET INVOLVED.

ROCK'N'ROOTS #6 / $5

8 x 6 – copied – 68 pgs – French
This fanzine from eastern France contains interviews including John James and The Soul makers (ska), The Presbytarians (ska), Les Jolis Rogers (punk), Toxic Kiss (pop), King Automatic (one man garage band), and Bloodshot Bill (one man rockabilly band). So as one can see this fanzine covers a lot of interesting ground. Also included are some funny comics, a bunch of record reviews, and plenty of cool ads for bands probably not familiar to those of us in America. But best of all this fanzine comes with an interesting CD sampler featuring nineteen bands, most of which are interviewed in this issue. Overall, this fanzine is a fun read. (HH)
Georges Humbert / 5 Rue Marlenheim / 67000 Strasbourg / France
Email: rootsrocker@yahoo.fr

SLINGSHOT #88 / $1

17 x 12 – printed – 14 pages
Long running Bay Area based political newspaper *Slingshot* is always a good read. This issue contains information on Hawaiian autonomy, People's Park (Berkeley) issues, Hurricane Katrina reactions, and much to my pleasure, an article on Dr. Phil and what a fucking asshole he is (I dunno why that guy pisses me off so much!). Also book reviews, protest and activity information, etc. (NM)
3124 Shattuck Ave. / Berkeley, CA / 94705
www.slingshot.tao.ca

SORRY TREES #2 / $?

Oh, boy, another zine that's stapled in the corner, instead of being folded, like zines should be. So right out the gate, *Sorry Trees* is on seriously thin ice with me. Some of the content is useful albeit sort of all over the place: info on how to avoid/fight off sexual predators, some recipes, and tips on how to improve gas mileage in your car. Still, some alright content can not make up for shoddy layouts and cover art. The best part about the zine is the name, because when trees give their lives for something like this, that name just says it all. (AS)
13329 Winterstown Rd. / Felton PA 17322

SUPPORT / $2.50

8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 64 pages
Wow. This is an incredibly inspiring and empowering compilation/resource for victims and survivors of sexual abuse and their allies. I read this during my lunch break at work and kind of lost the rest of the day. Edited and mostly written by Cindy of *Doris* zine fame, with contributions from lots of different people, men and

women, homo and hetero… lots of different perspectives and strategies and experiences. I am somehow not able to articulate how this affected me, but I recommend this zine wholeheartedly, it's useful, empowering, and beautifully written and illustrated. (LG)
(Microcosm Po Box 14332 Portland OR 97293)

SUSPECT DEVICE #46 / $5
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 68 pgs
Suspect Device sure is packed with loads-o-stuff! What is that, two-point type? Tons of interviews (Paint it Black, the Black Veins, and Varukers, among others), reviews, photos and reminiscences, all in a very clean, standard sized black and white zine. Trouble is, it's a little *too clean* for my tastes. I mean, punk is a frantic, crazy, intensely creative thing, and I think a zine dedicated to punk music should be exactly the same way. Good zine, but not great. (AS)
PO Box 295 / Southampton / SO17 ILW / UK

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #191 &192 / trade
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – Finnish
I always love looking at this zine, with it's really being the central source for punk info in Finland. And I do mean looking because, honestly, Finnish isn't the easiest language to decipher. My knowledge of it is limited to profanity and occasional words indicating some form of death, doom, or destruction (from lyrics). Anyway, in #191 there is coverage of the Blitz squat in Oslo (some English in that article actually), a tour diary (I think) from The Carnival, interviews with Turun Romantiikka, The Nerds, and This Thing Called Dying. #192 has a big article on Crass, a tour diary of Sur-rur, and an interview with Jann Wilde and Rose Avenue. Both have plenty of reviews, and tons of show info. (NM)
PO Box 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
www.punkinfinland.net/tv/english

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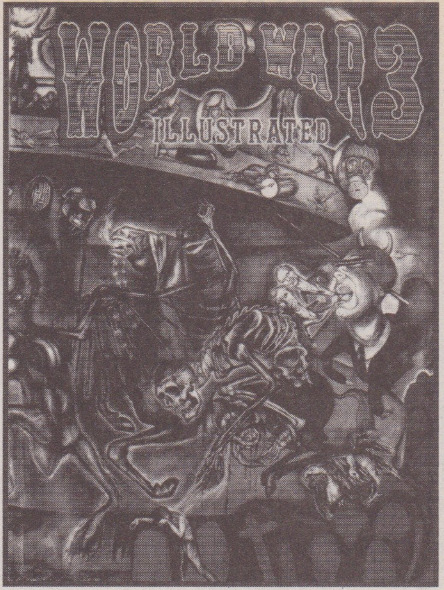
TRUE STORY #1 & #2 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 & 32 pgs
Cool, hand-scrawled, homemade zine from a teenager in Southwestern Florida. *True Story* is very endearing to me, as I can relate to things like reading *1984* for the first time, or getting into local punk bands that you can actually befriend and talk to. Issue #1 is passable—mostly just a reprint of an (interesting) article about video games from *Discover* magazine, with no comments from the editor. Some of it is bad, but in a so-bad-it's-good kind of way, a la *How Much Art Can You Take?* fanzine (e.g., the ultra-dorky pull-out centerfold with a drawing of a cheese sandwich, a speaker, a chair, and a flower). And some parts, like the piece in issue #2 about surviving hurricane Charley in 2004, are a really good read and show some promise for this young writer. (PC)
toasterkidd@hotmail.com

TU MAMA CALATA #1-3 / ???
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 8 pgs each – Spanish
An excellent punk zine from Lima, Peru and very focused on the local scene there. Each issue is pretty short. This is definitely a zine that has a sense of humor but also manages to cover some bands from that part of the world, including Morbo Sucio, El Terrible Y Los Mongoloides, Rabioso, and more. Don't know the price of these but send 'em a couple bucks for some issues or something. They are putting out a CD-R that will come with next issue, so watch out for that! (NM)
Bruno Guerra / Av. San Martin / Pueblo Libre / Lima / Peru
www.tumamacalata.tk



WORLD WAR 3 ILLUSTRATED #36 / $5
8 X 10.5 – printed – 72 pgs
The theme for this issue is "neo-con," and so of course, every comic story tells a story that has to do with the neo-conservatives and their destructive, desperate, and sad agenda. Most of the stories have to do with US foreign policy of the last four or five years, so there is a lot of Bush and a lot of Iraq. Interestingly, the strips were far more multi-dimensional than one might expect in this sort of collection of compiled political comics. I was expecting something more one dimensional: a progressively reactionary sort of publication. What I found instead was no doubt incendiary, but also managed to be quite convincing, as some of the stories were told from the point of view of people not readily labeled as either liberal or conservative. (AS)
PO Box 20777 / Tompkins Square Sta. / New York, NY 10009

THE YELLOW RAKE Issue 1, Volume 2 / no price listed
8.5 x 11 – printed – 30 pgs
A local zine that didn't really inspire any particular like or dislike on my part. The writing is very collegiate and references K records, post generation X apathy, and born again Christian skaters.
Brian Polk / PO Box 181024 / Denver CO 80218 / www.theyellowrake.com

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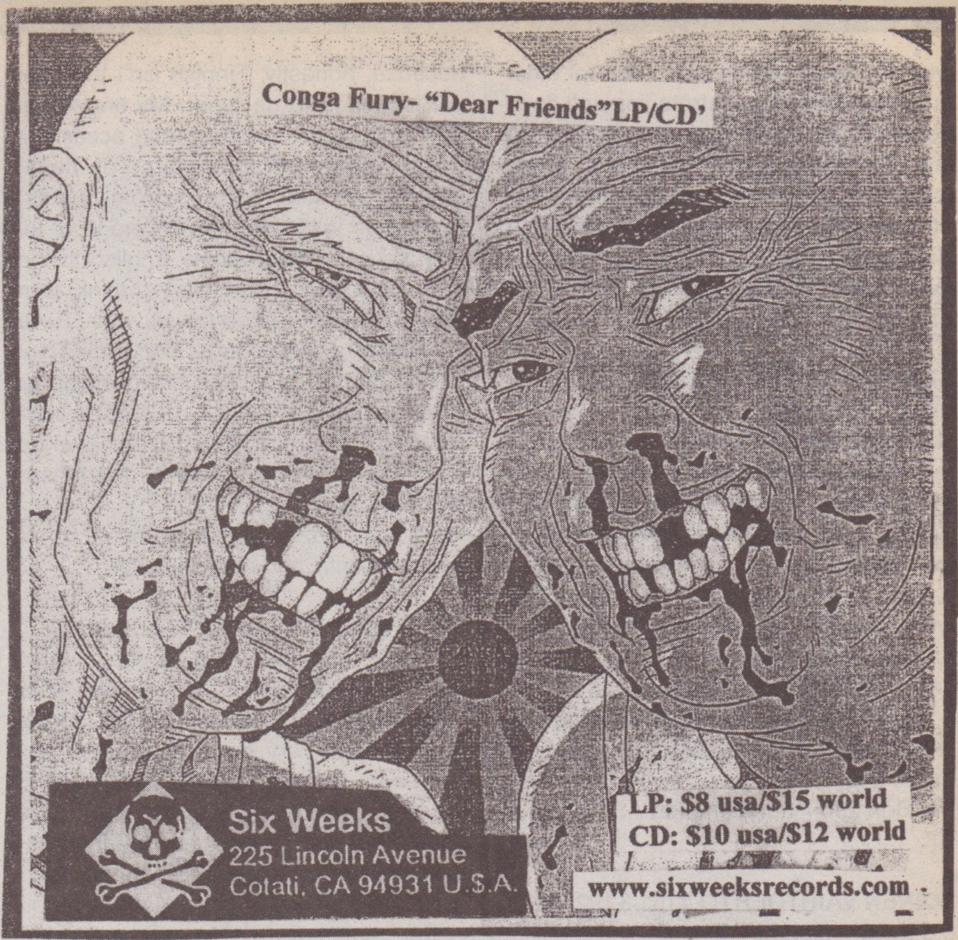

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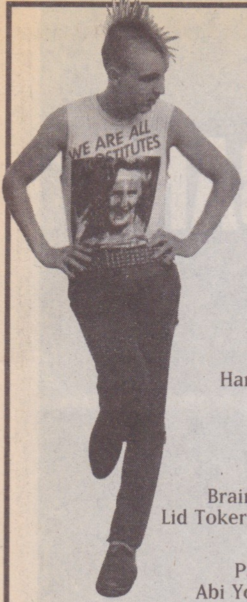

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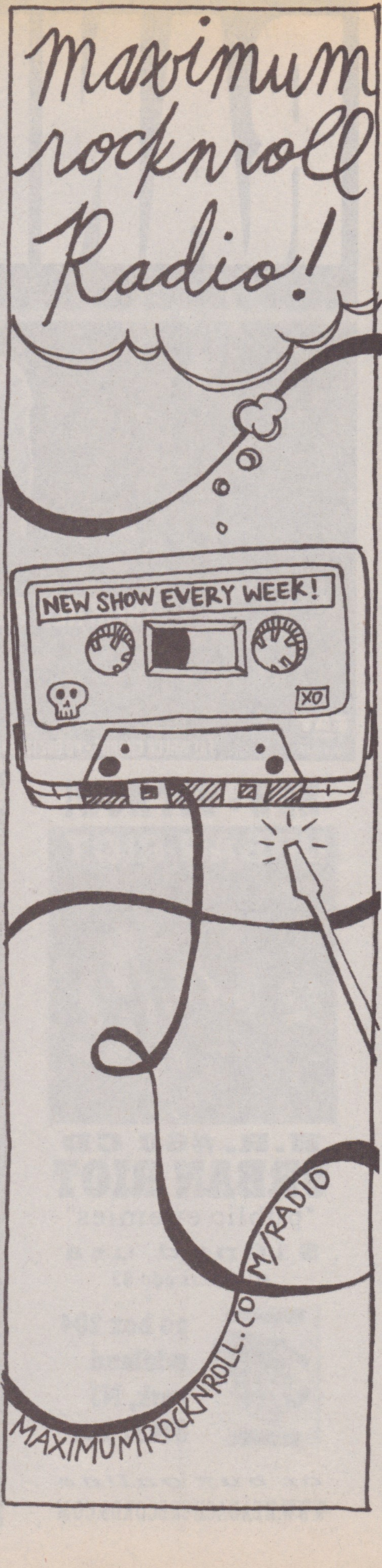
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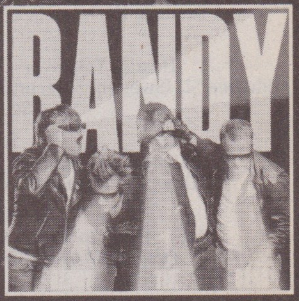

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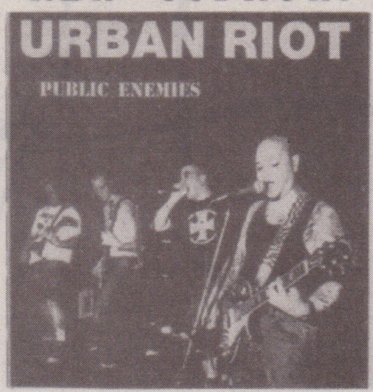

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To Hell And Back/Shemps split 7" $4ppd/7
Mark McCoy/mark Telfian split 7" $4ppd/7
The Dead Ones-s/t LP $8ppd (pre Regulations)

CLASSIFIEDS

Attention Classifieds Readers: When responding to these ads remember that the world of MRR readers is not a punk rock utopia where everyone is looking out for everyone else and we're all cool... Be careful what you tell people and be careful who you send money to. There are people out there in punkland who will try to rip you off, exploit you or manipulate you. Really, it's true.

DWELLING PORTABLY. POB 190-mrdp. Philomath, OR 97370. How to live comfortably without rent/taxes/hassles in tents, van wikiups, etc. Readers tell what works, and doesn't. "In-depth information...awesome" = MRR #254. $1. Back issues six / $5, 13 /$10, 30 / $20.

KILLEDBYDEATH.ORG Providing a 24 x 7 stream of the best punk and hardcore out there. Predictable KBD style snottiness to Los Crudos to Integrity to Zero Defex, we have it all, and it's free for you! Check www.killedbydeath.org for what's currently playing!

SOCIAL NAPALM RECORDS/ DISTRIBTION Out now: Mishap 7" (Broken Bones worship) and Lorteland comp tape reissue. (Enola Gay, Indigesti…) $4 US / $6 world airmail each. Catalog with current releases and reissues $3 or geocities.com/socnap82/PO Box 4073S. Chelmsford, MA/01824-0773/USA.

$4 WHORE BY THE STRAP-ONS with great tunes like "Traffic Ticket", "Johnny Jihad" lets Abolish government. Brought to you with $10 payable to: Dey Martin, naked Jain Records, PO Box 4132, Pam Springs, CA 92263. http://www.NAKEDJAINRECORDS.com

DISPLACED NEW ORLEANS, LA 23 yo punk chick looking for like-minded punx in the Texas/San Antonio/Austin area to talk, write, rock out with! Miz Cat, 1847 Babcock Road, Apt 302, San Antonio, TX 78229.

WWW.HUNGRYGHOSTSRECORDS.COM Check out our huge distro sale. HG participates in international trading, which only works with your support.

"WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR?" is a 20 band/20 track CD compilation including: The Fux, El Destructo, Kill the Witness, Exit Wound (ex-Common Enemy) Eden Park, Los Griswolds, Explosive Intent, and more.
Available through www.Interpunk.com www.CDBaby.com

BEST SELECTION of punk and core on the web '75-86 stoopidrecgemm.com Garage, art punk, keybourd punk metal-core, edge etc. All vinyl, because punk did not happen on CD.

WANTED: OLD NOISECORE/ GRINDNOISE TAPES. Need everything by Traci Lords Loves Noise and everything on Stupidity Records. Also anything on Bung International, H Records, Chaotic Noise, Gocharge, etc. Catalogs too. Let me know what you have. Will pay $$$.
chaosnonmusica@gmail.com

BIKE PEOPLE stop supporting superficial, profit driven bike shops & contact me for a bicycle supply list of new stuff. I sell via mail order & in person. bicycletraffic@yahoo.com.

ICKY RECORDINGS is back after an 11-year hiatus. If you ordered our sampler tape from these classifieds in 93, 94, or got any of our releases at a show, please get in touch. 20 Oakridge Rd, Bristol, CT 06010.

WRITE ME I'm bored and need new penpals. I like the 13th Floor Elevators, Plasmid, the Jam, the Deadly Weapons, Cock Sparrer, J Churchand Black Market Baby.
neverslavepunx@gmail.com

NUCLEAR "FUCK'IN" SKULL-N-BONES Fla.'s pissed off, disenfranchised underground misfits introduce their first studio three-song demo featuring "Resident Evil Mercenary" & "Smash, Crash, Burn." Get the new "Fuck the System" T-shirt ($13) before the Bush gestapo shuts them down!! nuclearskull.com

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Email: gingoblin@easynet.co.uk.

NUCLEAR FUCK'IN SKULL, Florida's pissed off, disenfranchised misfits: Nuclear Skull Cap $10. Nuclear Skull t-shirt $8. Pissing off and inspiring people worldwide. Priceless! www.NuclearSkull.com. Fuck'in attitude!

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